



KARL MARX  
AND  
FREDERICK ENGELS

SELECTED WORKS  
IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME II



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## PUBLISHERS' NOTE

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**AND**  
**FREDERICK ENGELS**  
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**VOLUME II**



*Karl Marx*

## CRITIQUE OF THE GOTHA PROGRAM

FOREWORD<sup>1</sup> BY FREDERICK ENGELS

The manuscript published here—the covering letter to Bracke as well as the critique of the draft program—was sent in 1875, shortly before the Gotha Unity Congress,<sup>2</sup> to Bracke for communication to Geib, Auer, Bebel and Liebknecht and subsequent return to Marx. Since the Halle Party Congress has put the discussion of the Gotha Program on the agenda of the Party, I think I would be guilty of suppression if I any longer withheld from publicity this important—perhaps the most important—document relevant to this discussion.

But the manuscript has yet another and more far-reaching significance. Here for the first time Marx's attitude to the line adopted by Lassalle in his agitation from the very beginning is clearly and firmly set forth, both as regards Lassalle's economic principles and his tactics.

The ruthless severity with which the draft program is dissected here, the mercilessness with which the results obtained are enun-

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<sup>1</sup> Marx's *Kritik des Gothaer Programms* [*Critique of the Gotha Program*] was published by Engels contrary to the wishes of the opportunist leadership of the German Social-Democratic Party. From Engels' letter to Kautsky (see pp. 42-45 of this volume) it appears that Engels also had to overcome the opposition of the latter and agree to moderate some of the more incisive passages before he could get the *Critique of the Gotha Program* published in the *Neue Zeit* [*New Time*]. In our edition the ms. text, which has been preserved, is completely restored.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> At the Gotha Congress (May 22-27, 1875) the two then existing German workers' organizations—the Social-Democratic Workers' Party (the so-called Eisenachers) led by Liebknecht and Bebel, and the Lassallean organization headed by Hasenclever, Hasselmann and Tölcke (the General Association of German Workers)—combined to form a single party, the Socialist Workers' Party of Germany.—*Ed.*



ciated and the shortcomings of the draft laid bare—all this today, after fifteen years, can no longer give offence. Specific Lassalleans now exist only abroad as isolated ruins, and in Halle the Gotha Program was given up even by its creators as altogether inadequate.<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, I have omitted a few sharp personal expressions and judgments where these were immaterial, and replaced them by dots. Marx himself would have done so if he had published the manuscript today. The violence of the language in some passages was provoked by two circumstances. In the first place, Marx and I had been more intimately connected with the German movement than with any other; we were, therefore, bound to be particularly perturbed by the decidedly retrograde step manifested by this draft program. And secondly, we were at that time, hardly two years after the Hague Congress of the International,<sup>2</sup> engaged in the most violent struggle against Bakunin and his anarchists, who made us responsible for everything that happened in the labour movement in Germany; hence we had to expect that we would also be saddled with the secret paternity of this program. These considerations do not now exist and so there is no necessity for the passages in question.

For reasons arising from the Press Law, also, a few sentences have been indicated only by dots. Where I have had to choose a milder expression this has been enclosed in square brackets. Otherwise the text has been reproduced word for word.

London, January 6, 1891

Written by Engels

Published in the journal  
*Neue Zeit* for 1891

Printed according to the text of  
the journal

Translated from the German

<sup>1</sup> The congress of the German Social-Democratic Party at Halle—the first congress after the abrogation of the Anti-Socialist Law—decided on October 16, 1890, on the motion of W. Liebknecht, the main author of the Gotha Program, to prepare a draft of a new program for the next Party congress. The new program (the Erfurt Program) was adopted at the Erfurt Congress in October 1891.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> The Hague Congress of the First International, held in September 1872, was dominated by the struggle against the Bakunists. The majority of the Congress supported the General Council, which was under the leadership of Marx. Bakunin was expelled from the International.—*Ed.*

*Karl Marx*

## LETTER TO W. BRACKE

London, May 5, 187

Dear Bracke,

When you have read the following critical marginal notes on the Unity Program, would you be so good as to send them on to Geib and Auer, Bebel and Liebknecht for them to examine. I am exceedingly busy and have already overstepped the limit of work allowed me by the doctor. Hence it was anything but a "pleasure" to write such a lengthy screed. It was, however, necessary so that the steps to be taken by me later on would not be misinterpreted by our friends in the Party for whom this communication is intended.

After the Unity Congress has been held, Engels and I will publish a short declaration to the effect that our position is altogether remote from the said program of principles and that we have nothing to do with it.

This is indispensable because the opinion—the entirely erroneous opinion—is held abroad, assiduously nurtured by enemies of the Party, that we secretly guide from here the movement of the so-called Eisenach Party. In a Russian book that has recently appeared,<sup>1</sup> Bakunin still makes me responsible, for example, not only for all the programs, etc., of that party but even for every step taken by Liebknecht from the day of his cooperation with the People's Party.

Apart from this, it is my duty not to give recognition, even by diplomatic silence, to what in my opinion is a thoroughly objectionable program that demoralizes the Party.

Every step of real movement is more important than a dozen programs. If, therefore, it was not possible—and the conditions of the time did not permit it—to go *beyond* the Eisenach program, one should simply have concluded an agreement for action again.

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<sup>1</sup> Бакунин М., *Государственность и анархия*, Цюрих, 1873.—Ed.

the common enemy. But by drawing up a program of principles (instead of postponing this until it has been prepared for by a considerable period of common activity) one sets up before the whole world landmarks by which it measures the level of the Party movement. The Lassalleans came because circumstances forced them to come. If they had been told in advance that there would be no bargaining about principles, they would have had to be content with a program of action or a plan of organization for common action. Instead of this, one permits them to arrive armed with mandates, recognizes these mandates on one's part as valid, and thus surrenders unconditionally to those who are themselves in need of help. To crown the whole business, they are holding a congress again *before* the *Congress of Compromise*, while one's own party is holding its congress *post festum*.<sup>1</sup> One had obviously had a desire to stifle all criticism and to give one's own party no opportunity for reflection. One knows that the mere fact of unification is satisfying to the workers, but it is a mistake to believe that this momentary success is not bought at too high a price.

For the rest, the program is no good altogether, even apart from its sanctification of the Lassallean articles of faith.

I shall be sending you in the near future the last part of the French edition of *Capital*.<sup>2</sup> The continuation of the printing was held up for a considerable time owing to the ban of the French government. The thing will be ready this week or the beginning of next week. Have you received the previous six parts? Please let me have the address of Bernhard Becker, to whom I must also send the final parts.

The bookshop of the *Volksstaat*<sup>3</sup> has peculiar ways of doing things. Up to this moment, for example, I have not been sent a single copy of the publication on the Cologne Communist Trial.

With best wishes,

Yours,

Karl Marx

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<sup>1</sup> *Post festum*: After the feast, that is, belatedly.

<sup>2</sup> The French translation of the first volume of *Capital*, edited by Marx himself, appeared in parts in 1872-75 in Paris.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup> The reference is to the party publishing house in Leipzig, under the direction of the editorial board of the *Volksstaat* (*People's State*—1869-76), the central organ of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany.—Ed.

## *Karl Marx*

### MARGINAL NOTES TO THE PROGRAM OF THE GERMAN WORKERS' PARTY

#### I

1. "Labour is the source of all wealth and all culture, and since useful labour is possible only in society and through society, the proceeds of labour belong undiminished with equal right to all members of society."

*First Part of the Paragraph:* "Labour is the source of all wealth and all culture."

Labour is *not the source* of all wealth. *Nature* is just as much the source of use values (and it is surely of such that material wealth consists!) as labour, which itself is only the manifestation of a force of nature, human labour power. The above phrase is to be found in all children's primers and is correct in so far as it is *implied* that labour is performed with the appu tenant subjects and instruments. But a socialist program cannot allow such bourgeois phrases to pass over in silence the *conditions* that alone give them meaning. And in so far as man from the beginning behaves towards nature, the primary source of all instruments and subjects of labour, as an owner, treats her as belonging to him, his labour becomes the source of use values, therefore also of wealth. The bourgeois have very good grounds for falsely ascribing *supernatural creative power* to labour; since precisely from the fact that labour depends on nature it follows that the man who possesses no other property than his labour power must, in all conditions of society and culture, be the slave of other men who have made themselves the owners of the material conditions of labour. He can work only with their permission, hence live only with their permission.

Let us now leave the sentence as it stands, or rather limps. What would one have expected in conclusion? Obviously this:

"Since labour is the source of all wealth, no one in society can appropriate wealth except as the product of labour. Therefore, if

he himself does not work, he lives by the labour of others and also acquires his culture at the expense of the labour of others."

Instead of this, by means of the verbal rivet "*and since*" a second proposition is added in order to draw a conclusion from this and not from the first one.

*Second Part of the Paragraph:* "Useful labour is possible only in society and through society."

According to the first proposition, labour was the source of all wealth and all culture; therefore no society is possible without labour. Now we learn, conversely, that no "useful" labour is possible without society.

One could just as well have said that only in society can useless and even socially harmful labour become a branch of gainful occupation, that only in society can one live by being idle, etc., etc.—in short, one could just as well have copied the whole of Rousseau.

And what is "useful" labour? Surely only labour which produces the intended useful result. A savage—and man was a savage after he had ceased to be an ape—who has killed an animal with a stone, who collects fruits, etc., performs "useful" labour.

*Thirdly. The conclusion:* "And since useful labour is possible only in society and through society, the proceeds of labour belong undiminished with equal right to all members of society."

A fine conclusion! If useful labour is possible only in society and through society, the proceeds of labour belong to society—and only so much therefrom accrues to the individual worker as is not required to maintain the "condition" of labour, society.

In fact, this proposition has at all times been made use of by the champions of the *state of society prevailing* at any given time. First come the claims of the government and everything that sticks to it, since it is the social organ for the maintenance of the social order; then come the claims of the various kinds of private property, for the various kinds of private property are the foundations of society, etc. One sees that such hollow phrases can be twisted and turned as desired.

The first and second parts of the paragraph have some intelligible connection only in the following wording:

"Labour becomes the source of wealth and culture only as social labour," or, what is the same thing, "in and through society."

This proposition is incontestably correct, for although isolated labour (its material conditions presupposed) can also create use values, it can create neither wealth nor culture.

But equally incontestable is this other proposition:

"In proportion as labour develops socially, and becomes thereby

a source of wealth and culture, poverty and destitution develop among the workers, and wealth and culture among the non-workers."

This is the law of all history hitherto. What, therefore, had to be done here, instead of setting down general phrases about "labour" and "society," was to prove concretely how in present capitalist society the material, etc., conditions have at last been created which enable and compel the workers to lift this social curse.

In fact, however, the whole paragraph, bungled in style and content, is only there in order to inscribe the Lassallean catchword of the "undiminished proceeds of labour" as a slogan at the top of the party banner. I shall return later to the "proceeds of labour," "equal right," etc., since the same thing recurs in a somewhat different form further on.

2. "In present-day society, the instruments of labour are the monopoly of the capitalist class; the resulting dependence of the working class is the cause of misery and servitude in all its forms."

This sentence, borrowed from the Rules of the International, is incorrect in this "improved" edition.

In present-day society the instruments of labour are the monopoly of the landowners (the monopoly of property in land is even the basis of the monopoly of capital) *and* the capitalists. In the passage in question, the Rules of the International do not mention either the one or the other class of monopolists. They speak of the "*monopolizer of the means of labour, that is, the sources of life.*" The addition, "*sources of life,*" makes it sufficiently clear that land is included in the instruments of labour.

The correction was introduced because Lassalle, for reasons now generally known, attacked *only* the capitalist class and not the landowners. In England, the capitalist is usually not even the owner of the land on which his factory stands.

3. "The emancipation of labour demands the promotion of the instruments of labour to the common property of society and the cooperative regulation of the total labour with a fair distribution of the proceeds of labour."

"Promotion of the instruments of labour to the common property" ought obviously to read their "conversion into the common property"; but this only in passing.

What are "proceeds of labour"? The product of labour or its value? And in the latter case, is it the total value of the product

or only that part of the value which labour has newly added to the value of the means of production consumed?

"Proceeds of labour" is a loose notion which Lassalle has put in the place of definite economic conceptions.

What is "a fair distribution"?

Do not the bourgeois assert that the present-day distribution is "fair"? And is it not, in fact, the only "fair" distribution on the basis of the present-day mode of production? Are economic relations regulated by legal conceptions or do not, on the contrary, legal relations arise from economic ones? Have not also the socialist sectarians the most varied notions about "fair" distribution?

To understand what is implied in this connection by the phrase "fair distribution," we must take the first paragraph and this one together. The latter presupposes a society wherein "the instruments of labour are common property and the total labour is cooperatively regulated," and from the first paragraph we learn that "the proceeds of labour belong undiminished with equal right to all members of society."

"To all members of society?" To those who do not work as well? What remains then of the "undiminished proceeds of labour"? Only to those members of society who work? What remains then of the "equal right" of all members of society?

But "all members of society" and "equal right" are obviously mere phrases. The kernel consists in this, that in this communist society every worker must receive the "undiminished" Lassallean "proceeds of labour."

Let us take first of all the words "proceeds of labour" in the sense of the product of labour; then the cooperative proceeds of labour are the *total social product*.

From this must now be deducted:

*First*, cover for replacement of the means of production used up.

*Secondly*, additional portion for expansion of production.

*Thirdly*, reserve or insurance funds to provide against accidents, dislocations caused by natural calamities, etc.

These deductions from the "undiminished proceeds of labour" are an economic necessity and their magnitude is to be determined according to available means and forces, and partly by computation of probabilities, but they are in no way calculable by equity.

There remains the other part of the total product, intended to serve as means of consumption.

Before this is divided among the individuals, there has to be deducted again, from it:

*First*, the general costs of administration not belonging to production.

This part will, from the outset, be very considerably restricted in comparison with present-day society and it diminishes in proportion as the new society develops.

*Secondly, that which is intended for the common satisfaction of needs* such as schools, health services, etc.

From the outset this part grows considerably in comparison with present-day society and it grows in proportion as the new society develops.

*Thirdly, funds for those unable to work*, etc., in short, for what is included under so-called official poor relief today.

Only now do we come to the "distribution" which the program, under Lassalleian influence, alone has in view in its narrow fashion, namely, to that part of the means of consumption which is divided among the individual producers of the cooperative society.

The "undiminished proceeds of labour" have already unnoticeably become converted into the "diminished" proceeds, although what the producer is deprived of in his capacity as a private individual benefits him directly or indirectly in his capacity as a member of society.

Just as the phrase of the "undiminished proceeds of labour" has disappeared, so now does the phrase of the "proceeds of labour" disappear altogether.

Within the cooperative society based on common ownership of the means of production, the producers do not exchange their products; just as little does the labour employed on the products appear here *as the value* of these products, as a material quality possessed by them, since now, in contrast to capitalist society, individual labour no longer exists in an indirect fashion but directly as a component part of the total labour. The phrase "proceeds of labour," objectionable also today on account of its ambiguity, thus loses all meaning.

What we have to deal with here is a communist society, not as it has *developed* on its own foundations, but, on the contrary, just as it *emerges* from capitalist society; which is thus in every respect, economically, morally and intellectually, still stamped with the birthmarks of the old society from whose womb it emerges. Accordingly, the individual producer receives back from society—after the deductions have been made—exactly what he gives to it. What he has given to it is his individual quantum of labour. For example, the social working day consists of the sum of the individual hours of work; the individual labour time of the individual producer is the part of the social working day contributed by him, his share in it. He receives a certificate from society that he has furnished such and such an amount of labour (after deducting his



labour for the common funds), and with this certificate he draws from the social stock of means of consumption as much as costs the same amount of labour. The same amount of labour which he has given to society in one form he receives back in another.

Here obviously the same principle prevails as that which regulates the exchange of commodities, as far as this is exchange of equal values. Content and form are changed, because under the altered circumstances no one can give anything except his labour, and because, on the other hand, nothing can pass to the ownership of individuals except individual means of consumption. But, as far as the distribution of the latter among the individual producers is concerned, the same principle prevails as in the exchange of commodity-equivalents: a given amount of labour in one form is exchanged for an equal amount of labour in another form.

Hence, *equal right* here is still in principle—*bourgeois right*, although principle and practice are no longer at loggerheads, while the exchange of equivalents in commodity exchange only exists *on the average* and not in the individual case.

In spite of this advance, this *equal right* is still constantly stigmatized by a bourgeois limitation. The right of the producers is *proportional* to the labour they supply; the equality consists in the fact that measurement is made with an *equal standard*, labour.

But one man is superior to another physically or mentally and so supplies more labour in the same time, or can labour for a longer time; and labour, to serve as a measure, must be defined by its duration or intensity, otherwise it ceases to be a standard of measurement. This *equal right* is an unequal right for unequal labour. It recognizes no class differences, because everyone is only a worker like everyone else; but it tacitly recognizes unequal individual endowment and thus productive capacity as natural privileges. *It is, therefore, a right of inequality, in its content, like every right.* Right by its very nature can consist only in the application of an equal standard; but unequal individuals (and they would not be different individuals if they were not unequal) are measurable only by an equal standard in so far as they are brought under an equal point of view, are taken from one *definite* side only, for instance, in the present case, are regarded *only as workers*, and nothing more is seen in them, everything else being ignored. Further, one worker is married, another not; one has more children than another, and so on and so forth. Thus, with an equal performance of labour, and hence an equal share in the social consumption fund, one will in fact receive more than another, one will be richer than another, and so on. To avoid all these defects, right instead of being equal would have to be unequal.

But these defects are inevitable in the first phase of communist society as it is when it has just emerged after prolonged birth pangs from capitalist society. Right can never be higher than the economic structure of society and its cultural development conditioned thereby.

In a higher phase of communist society, after the enslaving subordination of the individual to the division of labour, and therewith also the antithesis between mental and physical labour, has vanished; after labour has become not only a means of life but life's prime want; after the productive forces have also increased with the all-round development of the individual, and all the springs of cooperative wealth flow more abundantly—only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be crossed in its entirety and society inscribe on its banners: From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!

I have dealt more at length with the "undiminished proceeds of labour," on the one hand, and with "equal right" and "fair distribution," on the other, in order to show what a crime it is to attempt, on the one hand, to force on our Party again, as dogmas, ideas which in a certain period had some meaning but have now become obsolete verbal rubbish, while again perverting, on the other, the realistic outlook, which it cost so much effort to instil into the Party but which has now taken root in it, by means of ideological nonsense about right and other trash so common among the democrats and French Socialists.

Quite apart from the analysis so far given, it was in general a mistake to make a fuss about so-called *distribution* and put the principal stress on it.

Any distribution whatever of the means of consumption is only a consequence of the distribution of the conditions of production themselves. The latter distribution, however, is a feature of the mode of production itself. The capitalist mode of production, for example, rests on the fact that the material conditions of production are in the hands of non-workers in the form of property in capital and land, while the masses are only owners of the personal condition of production, of labour power. If the elements of production are so distributed, then the present-day distribution of the means of consumption results automatically. If the material conditions of production are the cooperative property of the workers themselves, then there likewise results a distribution of the means of consumption different from the present one. Vulgar Socialism (and from it in turn a section of the democracy) has taken over from the bourgeois economists the consideration and treatment of distribution as independent of the mode of production and hence the

presentation of Socialism as turning principally on distribution. After the real relation has long been made clear, why retrogress again?

4. "The emancipation of labour must be the work of the working class, relatively to which all other classes are *only one reactionary mass*."

The first strophe is taken from the introductory words of the Rules of the International, but "improved." There it is said: "The emancipation of the working class must be the act of the workers themselves"; here, on the contrary, the "working class" has to emancipate—what? "Labour." Let him understand who can.

In compensation, the antistrophe, on the other hand, is a Lassallean quotation of the first water: "relatively to which (the working class) all other classes are *only one reactionary mass*."

In the *Communist Manifesto* it is said: "Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is a *really revolutionary class*. The other classes decay and finally disappear in the face of modern industry; the proletariat is its special and essential product."<sup>1</sup>

The bourgeoisie is here conceived as a revolutionary class—as the bearer of large-scale industry—relatively to the feudal lords and the lower middle class, who desire to maintain all social positions that are the creation of obsolete modes of production. Thus they do not form *together* with the *bourgeoisie* only one reactionary mass.

On the other hand, the proletariat is revolutionary relatively to the bourgeoisie because, having itself grown up on the basis of large-scale industry, it strives to strip off from production the capitalist character that the bourgeoisie seeks to perpetuate. But the *Manifesto* adds that the "lower middle class"... is becoming revolutionary "in view of [its] impending transfer into the proletariat."

From this point of view, therefore, it is again nonsense to say that it, together with the bourgeoisie, and with the feudal lords into the bargain, "form only one reactionary mass" relatively to the working class.

Has one proclaimed to the artisans, small manufacturers, etc., and *peasants* during the last elections: Relatively to us you, together with the bourgeoisie and feudal lords, form only one reactionary mass?

Lassalle knew the *Communist Manifesto* by heart, as his faithful followers know the gospels written by him. If, therefore, he has

<sup>1</sup> See *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Moscow 1949, p. 60.—Ed.

falsified it so grossly, this has occurred only to put a good colour on his alliance with absolutist and feudal opponents against the bourgeoisie.

In the above paragraph, moreover, his oracular saying is dragged in by main force without any connection with the botched quotation from the Rules of the International. Thus it is here simply an impertinence, and indeed not at all displeasing to Herr Bismarck, one of those cheap pieces of insolence in which the Marat of Berlin<sup>1</sup> deals;

5. "The working class strives for its emancipation first of all *within the framework of the present-day national state*, conscious that the necessary result of its efforts, which are common to the workers of all civilized countries, will be the international brotherhood of peoples."

Lassalle, in opposition to the *Communist Manifesto* and to all earlier Socialism, conceived the workers' movement from the narrowest national standpoint. He is being followed in this—and that after the work of the International!

It is altogether self-evident that, to be able to fight at all, the working class must organize itself at home *as a class* and that its own country is the immediate arena of its struggle. In so far its class struggle is national, not in substance, but, as the *Communist Manifesto* says, "in form." But the "framework of the present-day national state," for instance, the German Empire, is itself in its turn economically "within the framework" of the world market, politically "within the framework" of the system of states. Every businessman knows that German trade is at the same time foreign trade, and the greatness of Herr Bismarck consists, to be sure, precisely in his pursuing a kind of *international* policy.

And to what does the German workers' party reduce its internationalism? To the consciousness that the result of its efforts will be "*the international brotherhood of peoples*"—a phrase borrowed from the bourgeois League of Peace and Freedom,<sup>2</sup> which is intended to pass as equivalent to the international brotherhood of the working classes in the joint struggle against the ruling classes and their governments. Not a word, therefore, *about the international functions*

<sup>1</sup> The "Marat of Berlin" is obviously an ironical reference to Hasselmann, the chief editor of the *Neuer Social-Demokrat*, the central organ of the Lassalleans.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> The *International League of Peace and Freedom* was organized in Geneva in 1867 by bourgeois democrats and pacifists. On the insistence of Marx and under his direction, the First International resolutely fought against the League's demagogic slogans, which diverted the proletariat from the class struggle.—Ed.

of the German working class! And it is thus that it is to challenge its own bourgeoisie—which is already linked up in brotherhood against it with the bourgeois of all other countries—and Herr Bismarck's international policy of conspiracy!

In fact, the internationalism of the program stands *even infinitely below* that of the Free Trade Party. The latter also asserts that the result of its efforts will be "the international brotherhood of peoples." But it also *does* something to make trade international and by no means contents itself with the consciousness—that all peoples are carrying on trade at home.

The international activity of the working classes does not in any way depend on the existence of the *International Working Men's Association*. This was only the first attempt to create a central organ for that activity; an attempt which was a lasting success on account of the impulse which it gave but which was no longer realizable in its *first historical form* after the fall of the Paris Commune.

Bismarck's *Norddeutsche* was absolutely right when it announced, to the satisfaction of its master, that the German workers' party had sworn off internationalism in the new program.<sup>1</sup>

## II

"Starting from these basic principles, the German workers' party strives by all legal means for the *free state*—and—socialist society: the abolition of the wage system *together with the iron law of wages*—and—exploitation in every form; the elimination of all social and political inequality."

I shall return to the "free" state later.

So, in future, the German workers' party has got to believe in Lassalle's "iron law of wages"! That this may not be lost, the nonsense is perpetrated of speaking of the "abolition of the wage system" (it should read: system of wage labour) "*together with the iron law of wages*." If I abolish wage labour, then naturally I abolish its laws also, whether they are of "iron" or sponge. But Lassalle's attack on wage labour turns almost solely on this so-called law. In order, therefore, to prove that Lassalle's sect has conquered,

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<sup>1</sup> Marx has reference to the editorial which appeared in No. 67 of the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* [North German General Newspaper] of March 20, 1875. It stated with regard to Article 5 of the Program of the Social-Demo-

the "wage system" must be abolished *"together with the iron law of wages"* and not without it.

It is well known that nothing of the "iron law of wages" is Lassalle's except the word "iron" borrowed from Goethe's "great, eternal iron laws." The word *iron* is a label by which the true believers recognize one another. But if I take the law with Lassalle's stamp on it and, consequently, in his sense, then I must also take it with his substantiation for it. And what is that? As Lange already showed, shortly after Lassalle's death, it is the Malthusian theory of population (preached by Lange himself). But if this theory is correct, then again I can *not* abolish the law even if I abolish wage labour a hundred times over, because the law then governs not only the system of wage labour but *every* social system. Basing themselves directly on this, the economists have been proving for fifty years and more that Socialism cannot abolish poverty, *which has its basis in nature*, but can only make it *general*, distribute it simultaneously over the whole surface of society!

But all this is not the main thing. *Quite apart* from the false Lassallean formulation of the law, the truly outrageous retrogression consists in the following:

Since Lassalle's death there has asserted itself in our Party the scientific understanding that wages are not what they *appear* to be, namely, the *value, or price, of labour*, but only a masked form for the *value, or price, of labour power*. Thereby the whole bourgeois conception of wages hitherto, as well as all the criticism hitherto directed against this conception, was thrown overboard once for all and it was made clear that the wage worker has permission to work for his own subsistence, that is, *to live*, only in so far as he works for a certain time gratis for the capitalist (and hence also for the latter's co-consumers of surplus value); that the whole capitalist system of production turns on the increase of this gratis labour by extending the working day or by developing the productivity, that is, increasing the intensity of labour power, etc.; that, consequently, the system of wage labour is a system of slavery, and indeed of a slavery which becomes more severe in proportion as the social productive forces of labour develop, whether the worker receives better or worse payment. And after this understanding has gained more and more ground in our Party, one returns to Lassalle's dogmas, although one must have known that Lassalle *did not know* what wages were, but following in the wake of the bourgeois economists took the appearance for the essence of the matter.

It is as if, among slaves who have at last got behind the secret of slavery and broken out in rebellion, a slave still in thrall to obsolete notions were to inscribe on the program of the rebellion:

Slavery must be abolished because the feeding of slaves in the system of slavery cannot exceed a certain low maximum!

Does not the mere fact that the representatives of our Party were capable of perpetrating such a monstrous attack on the understanding that has spread among the mass of our Party prove by itself with what criminal levity and with what lack of conscience they set to work in drawing up this compromise program!

Instead of the indefinite concluding phrase of the paragraph, "the elimination of all social and political inequality," it ought to have been said that with the abolition of class distinctions all social and political inequality arising from them would disappear of itself.

### III

*"The German workers' party, in order to pave the way to the solution of the social question, demands the establishment of producers' cooperative societies with state aid under the democratic control of the toiling people. The producers' cooperative societies are to be called into being for industry and agriculture on such a scale that the socialist organization of the total labour will arise from them."*

After the Lassallean "iron law of wages," the physis of the prophet. The way to it is "paved" in worthy fashion. In place of the existing class struggle appears a newspaper scribbler's phrase: "the social question," to the "solution" of which one "paves the way." Instead of arising from the revolutionary process of transformation of society, the "socialist organization of the total labour" "arises" from the "state aid" that the state gives to the producers' cooperative societies and which the state, not the worker, "calls into being." It is worthy of Lassalle's imagination that with state loans one can build a new society just as well as a new railway!

From the remnants of a sense of shame, "state aid" has been put—under the democratic control of the "toiling people."

In the first place, the majority of the "toiling people" in Germany consists of peasants, and not of proletarians.

Secondly, "democratic" means in German "*volksherrschaftlich*," ["by the rule of the people"]. But what does "control by the rule of the people of the toiling people" mean? And particularly in the case of a toiling people which, through these demands that it puts to the state, expresses its full consciousness that it neither rules nor is ripe for ruling!

It would be superfluous to deal here with the criticism of the recipe prescribed by Buchez in the reign of Louis Philippe in *opposition* to the French Socialists and accepted by the reactionary workers of the *Atelier*.<sup>1</sup> The chief offence does not lie in having inscribed this specific nostrum in the program, but in taking, in general, a retrograde step from the standpoint of a class movement to that of a sectarian movement.

That the workers desire to establish the conditions for cooperative production on a social scale, and first of all on a national scale, in their own country, only means that they are working to revolutionize the present conditions of production, and it has nothing in common with the foundation of cooperative societies with state aid. But as far as the present cooperative societies are concerned, they are of value *only* in so far as they are the independent creations of the workers and not protégés either of the governments or of the bourgeois.

#### IV

I come now to the democratic section.

##### A. "*The free basis of the state.*"

First of all, according to II, the German workers' party strives for "the free state."

Free state—what is this?

It is by no means the aim of the workers, who have got rid of the narrow mentality of humble subjects, to set the state free. In the German Empire the "state" is almost as "free" as in Russia. Freedom consists in converting the state from an organ superimposed upon society into one completely subordinate to it, and today, too, the forms of state are more free or less free to the extent that they restrict the "freedom of the state."

The German workers' party—at least if it adopts the program—shows that its socialist ideas are not even skin-deep; in that, instead of treating existing society (and this holds good for any future one) as the *basis* of the existing state (or of the future state in the case of future society), it treats the state rather as an independent entity that possesses its own *intellectual, ethical and libertarian bases*.

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<sup>1</sup> *Atelier [Workshop]*: A workers' monthly which appeared in Paris in 1840-50. It was under the influence of the Catholic Socialism of Buchez.—Ed.



And what of the riotous misuse which the program makes of the words "*present-day state*," "*present-day society*," and of the still more riotous misconception it creates in regard to the state to which it addresses its demands?

"Present-day society" is capitalist society, which exists in all civilized countries, more or less free from medieval admixture, more or less modified by the special historical development of each country, more or less developed. On the other hand, the "present-day state" changes with a country's frontier. It is different in the Prusso-German Empire from what it is in Switzerland, it is different in England from what it is in the United States. "*The present-day state*" is, therefore, a fiction.

Nevertheless, the different states of the different civilized countries, in spite of their manifold diversity of form, all have this in common, that they are based on modern bourgeois society, only one more or less capitalistically developed. They have, therefore, also certain essential features in common. In this sense it is possible to speak of the "present-day state," in contrast with the future, in which its present root, bourgeois society, will have died off.

The question then arises: what transformation will the state undergo in communist society? In other words, what social functions will remain in existence there that are analogous to present functions of the state? This question can only be answered scientifically, and one does not get a flea-hop nearer to the problem by a thousandfold combination of the word people with the word state.

Between capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. There corresponds to this also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but *the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat*.

Now the program does not deal with this nor with the future state of communist society.

Its political demands contain nothing beyond the old democratic litany familiar to all: universal suffrage, direct legislation, popular rights, a people's militia, etc. They are a mere echo of the bourgeois People's Party,<sup>1</sup> of the League of Peace and Freedom. They are all demands which, in so far as they are not exaggerated in fantastic presentation, have already been *realized*. Only the state to which

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<sup>1</sup> The *People's Party* was founded in September 1865 in Darmstadt and officially organized at the Stuttgart Congress in September 1868. It was the party of the petty bourgeoisie, particularly in South Germany. In opposition to Bismarck's policy of the unification of Germany under the hegemony of Junker Prussia, it advocated the petty-bourgeois principle of federalism.—*Ed.*

they belong does not lie within the borders of the German Empire, but in Switzerland, the United States, etc. This sort of "state of the future" is a present-day state, although existing outside the "framework" of the German Empire.

But one thing has been forgotten. Since the German workers' party expressly declares that it acts within "the present-day national state," hence within *its own* state, the Prusso-German Empire—its demands would indeed otherwise be largely meaningless, since one only demands what one has not got—it should not have forgotten the chief thing, namely, that all those pretty little gewgaws rest on the recognition of the so-called sovereignty of the people and hence are appropriate only in a *democratic republic*.

Since one has not the courage—and wisely so, for the circumstances demand caution—to demand the democratic republic, as the French workers' programs under Louis Philippe and under Louis Napoleon did, one should not have resorted, either, to the subterfuge, neither "honest"<sup>1</sup> nor decent, of demanding things which have meaning only in a democratic republic from a state which is nothing but a police-guarded military despotism, embellished with parliamentary forms, alloyed with a feudal admixture, already influenced by the bourgeoisie and bureaucratically carpentered, and then to assure this state into the bargain that one imagines one will be able to force such things upon it "by legal means."

Even vulgar democracy, which sees the millennium in the democratic republic and has no suspicion that it is precisely in this last form of state of bourgeois society that the class struggle has to be fought out to a conclusion—even it towers mountains above this kind of democratism which keeps within the limits of what is permitted by the police and not permitted by logic.

That, in fact, by the word "state" is meant the government machine, or the state in so far as it forms a special organism separated from society through division of labour, is shown by the words "the German workers' party demands *as the economic basis of the state*: a single progressive income tax," etc. Taxes are the economic basis of the government machinery and of nothing else. In the state of the future, existing in Switzerland, this demand has been pretty well fulfilled. Income tax presupposes various sources of income of the various social classes, and hence capitalist society. It is, therefore, nothing remarkable that the Liverpool financial reformers, bourgeois headed by Gladstone's brother, are putting forward the same demand as the program.

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<sup>1</sup> "*Honest*" was the epithet applied to the Eisenachers. Here a play upon words.—Ed.

B. "The German workers' party demands as the intellectual and ethical basis of the state:

"1. Universal and *equal elementary education* by state. Universal compulsory school attendance. Free instruction."

*Equal elementary education?* What idea lies behind these words? Is it believed that in present-day society (and it is only with the one we have to deal) education can be *equal* for all classes? Or is it demanded that the upper classes also shall be compulsorily reduced to a modicum of education—the elementary school—that alone is compatible with the economic conditions not only of the wage workers but of the peasants as well?

"Universal compulsory school attendance. Free instruction." The former exists even in Germany, the second in Switzerland and the United States in the case of elementary schools. If in some states of the latter country higher educational institutions are also "free" that only means in fact defraying the cost of the education of the upper classes from the general tax receipts. Incidentally, the same holds good for "free administration of justice" demanded under A. 5. The administration of criminal justice is to be had free everywhere; that of civil justice is concerned almost exclusively with conflicts over property and hence affects almost exclusively the possessing classes. Are they to carry on their litigation at the expense of the national coffers?

The paragraph on the schools should at least have demanded technical schools (theoretical and practical) in combination with the elementary school.

"*Elementary education by the state*" is altogether objectionable. Defining by a general law the expenditures on the elementary school, the qualifications of the teaching staff, the branches of instruction, etc., and, as is done in the United States, supervising the fulfilment of these legal specifications by state inspectors, is a very different thing from appointing the state as the educator of the people! Government and church should rather be equally excluded from any influence on the school. Particularly, indeed, in the Prusso-German Empire (and one should not take refuge in the rotten subterfuge that one is speaking of a "state of the future"; we have seen how matters stand in this respect) the state has need, on the contrary, of a very stern education by the people.

But the whole program, for all its democratic clang, is tainted through and through by the Lassalleian sect's servile belief in the state, or, what is no better, by a democratic belief in miracles, or rather it is a compromise between these two kinds of belief in miracles, both equally remote from Socialism.

"*Freedom of science*" says a paragraph of the Prussian constitution. Why, then, here?

"*Freedom of conscience!*" If one desired at this time of the *Kulturkampf*<sup>1</sup> to remind liberalism of its old catchwords, it surely could have been done only in the following form: Everyone should be able to attend to his religious as well as his bodily needs without the police sticking their noses in. But the workers' party ought at any rate in this connection to have expressed its awareness of the fact that bourgeois "*freedom of conscience*" is nothing but the toleration of all possible kinds of *religious freedom of conscience*, and that for its part it endeavours rather to liberate the conscience from the witchery of religion. But one chooses not to transgress the "bourgeois" level.

I have now come to the end, for the appendix that now follows in the program does not constitute a characteristic component part of it. Hence I can be very brief here.

## 2. "Normal working day."

In no other country has the workers' party limited itself to such an indefinite demand, but has always fixed the length of the working day that it considers normal under the given circumstances.

## 3. "Restriction of female labour and prohibition of child labour."

The standardization of the working day must include the restriction of female labour, in so far as it relates to the duration, intermissions, etc., of the working day; otherwise it could only mean the exclusion of female labour from branches of industry that are especially unhealthy for the female body or are objectionable morally for the female sex. If that is what was meant, it should have been said so.

"*Prohibition of child labour!*" Here it was absolutely essential to state the age limit.

A *general prohibition* of child labour is incompatible with the existence of large-scale industry and hence an empty, pious wish. Its realization—if it were possible—would be reactionary, since, with a strict regulation of the working time according to the different age groups and other safety measures for the protection of

<sup>1</sup> *Kulturkampf* [Struggle for Culture]: Bismarck's struggle in the seventies against the German Catholic party, the Party of the "Centre," by means of police persecution of Catholicism.—Ed.

children, an early combination of productive labour with education is one of the most potent means for the transformation of present-day society.

4. "State supervision of factory, workshop and domestic industry."

In consideration of the Prusso-German state it should definitely have been demanded that the inspectors are to be removable only by a court of law; that any worker can have them prosecuted for neglect of duty; that they must belong to the medical profession.

5. "Regulation of prison labour."

A petty demand in a general workers' program. In any case, it should have been clearly stated that there is no intention from fear of competition to allow ordinary criminals to be treated like beasts, and especially that there is no desire to deprive them of their sole means of betterment, productive labour. This was surely the least one might have expected from Socialists.

6. "An effective liability law."

It should have been stated what is meant by an "effective" liability law.

Be it noted, incidentally, that in speaking of the normal working day the part of factory legislation that deals with health regulations and safety measures, etc., has been overlooked. The liability law only comes into operation when these regulations are infringed.

In short, this appendix also is distinguished by slovenly editing.

*Dixi et salvavi animam meam.*<sup>1</sup>

Written by Marx in the beginning  
of May, 1875

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<sup>1</sup> I have spoken and saved my soul.—*Ed.*

## Frederick Engels

### LETTER TO A. BEBEL

London, March 18-28, 1875

Dear Bebel,

I received your letter of February 23 and am glad you are in such good health.

You ask me what we think of the unification business. Unfortunately our fate has been the same as yours. Neither Liebknecht nor anyone else has sent us any information and we too, therefore, know only what is in the papers, and there was nothing in them until the draft program appeared about a week ago! This draft has certainly astonished us not a little.

Our Party has so frequently made offers of reconciliation or at least of cooperation to the Lassalleans and has been so frequently and contemptuously repulsed by the Hasenclevers, Hasselmanns and Tölckes that any child must have drawn the conclusion: if these gentlemen are now coming and offering reconciliation themselves they must be in a damned tight fix. But considering the well-known character of these people it is our duty to utilize their fix in order to stipulate for every possible guarantee, so that they will not re-establish their impaired position in the public opinion of the workers at the expense of our Party. They should have been received with extreme coolness and mistrust, and union made dependent on the extent to which they were willing to drop their sectarian slogans and their state aid and to accept in its essentials the Eisenach program of 1869 or a revised edition of it adapted to the present day. Our Party has *absolutely nothing to learn* from the Lassalleans in the theoretical sphere and therefore in what is decisive for the program, but the Lassalleans certainly have something to learn from our Party; the first condition of union should have been that they cease to be sectarians, Lassalleans, above all that the universal panacea of state aid should be, if not entirely relinquished, at any rate recognized by them as a subordinate transitional measure,

one among and alongside of many other possible ones. The draft program shows that our people are a hundred times superior theoretically to the Lassallean leaders—but to the same extent inferior to them in political cunning; the “honest” have been once more cruelly gypped by the dishonest.

In the first place Lassalle’s high-sounding but historically false phrase is accepted: relatively to the working class all other classes are only one reactionary mass. This statement is only true in a few exceptional cases: for instance, in a revolution of the proletariat, like the Commune, or in a country where not only the bourgeoisie has moulded state and society in its own image but where in its wake the democratic petty bourgeoisie, too, has already carried out this remoulding down to its final consequences. If in Germany, for instance, the democratic petty bourgeoisie belonged to this reactionary mass, how could the Social-Democratic Workers’ Party have gone hand in hand with it—with the People’s Party—for years? How can the *Volksstaat* take almost the whole of its political contents from the petty-bourgeois-democratic *Frankfurter Zeitung*? And how comes it that no less than seven demands are included in this program which directly and literally coincide with the program of the People’s Party and the petty-bourgeois democracy? I mean the seven political demands, 1 to 5 and 1 to 2, of which there is not a single one that is not *bourgeois-democratic*.<sup>1</sup>

Secondly, the principle that the workers’ movement is an international movement is, to all intents and purposes, completely disavowed for the present day, and that by people who have upheld this principle most gloriously for five whole years under the most difficult conditions. The German workers’ position at the head of the European movement is *essentially* based on their genuinely international attitude during the war; no other proletariat would have behaved so well. And now this principle is to be disavowed by them at the very moment when the workers everywhere

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<sup>1</sup> These political demands of the Gotha Program read as follows:

“The German workers’ party demands as the free basis of the state:

“1. Universal, equal, direct and secret suffrage for all males twenty-one years of age and above, for all elections—national and local. 2. Direct legislation by the people with right of initiative and referendum. 3. Universal military training. People’s militia instead of the standing army. War and peace to be decided by the representative assembly of the people. 4. Abolition of all exceptional laws, especially the laws on the press, association and assembly. 5. People’s courts. Free administration of justice.

“The German workers’ party demands as the intellectual and ethical basis of the state:

“1. Universal and equal elementary education by the state. Universal compulsory school attendance. Free instruction. 2. Freedom of science. Freedom of conscience.”—*Ed.*

abroad are emphasizing it in the same degree as the governments are striving to suppress every attempted manifestation of it in any organization! And what is left of the internationalism of the workers' movement then? The faint prospect—not even of a future co-operation of the European workers for their emancipation—no, but of a future “international brotherhood of peoples,” of the “United States of Europe” of the bourgeois of the Peace League!

It was of course quite unnecessary to speak of the International as such. But surely the very least would have been to make no retreat from the program of 1869 and to say something to this effect: *although* the German workers party is operating *first of all* within the state boundaries laid down for it (it has no right to speak in the name of the European proletariat and especially no right to say something false), it is conscious of its solidarity with the workers of all countries and will always be ready hereafter, as it has been hitherto, to fulfil the obligations imposed upon it by this solidarity. Obligations of that kind exist even without exactly proclaiming or regarding oneself as a part of the International; for instance, help and abstention from blacklegging in strikes; care taken that the Party organs keep the German workers informed about the movement abroad; agitation against the threat or the outbreak of Cabinet-made wars, behaviour during such wars similar to that carried out in model fashion in 1870 and 1871, etc.

Thirdly, our people have allowed the Lassallean “iron law of wages” to be foisted upon them, a law based on a quite antiquated economic view, namely, that the worker receives on the average only the *minimum* of the wage, because, according to Malthus' theory of population, there are always too many workers (this was Lassalle's argument). Now Marx has proved in detail in *Capital* that the laws regulating wages are very complicated, that sometimes one predominates and sometimes another, according to circumstances, that therefore they are in no sense iron but on the contrary very elastic, and that the matter can by no means be dismissed in a few words, as Lassalle imagined. The Malthusian argument in support of the law, which Lassalle copied from Malthus and Ricardo (with a distortion of the latter), as it is to be found, for instance, in the *Workers' Reader* [*Arbeiterlesebuch*], page 5, quoted from another pamphlet of Lassalle's, has been refuted in detail by Marx in the section on the “Accumulation of Capital.” Thus by adopting Lassalle's “iron law” we commit ourselves to a false thesis with a false substantiation.

Fourthly, the program puts forward as its *sole social demand*—Lassalle's state aid in its most naked form, as Lassalle stole it from Buchez. And this after Bracke has very well exposed the utter fu-



tility of this demand<sup>1</sup> and after almost all, if not all, our Party speakers have been obliged to come out against this "state aid" in fighting the Lassalleans! Lower than this our Party could not humiliate itself. Internationalism brought down to Amand Gögg and Socialism to the bourgeois republican Buchez, who put forward this demand *in opposition to the Socialists*, in order to get the better of them!

At the most, however, "state aid" in the Lassallean sense is only a *single* measure among many others designed to attain the end here lamely described as "paving the way to the solution of the social question"—as if a theoretically *unsolved* social question still existed for us! So if one says: the German workers' party strives for the abolition of wage labour, and with it of class distinctions, by the establishment of cooperative production in industry and agriculture and on a national scale; it supports every measure appropriate for the attainment of this end!—then no Lassallean can have anything against it.

Fifthly, there is not a word about the organization of the working class as a class by means of the trade unions. And that is a very essential point, for this is the real class organization of the proletariat, in which it carries on its daily struggles with capital, in which it trains itself, and which nowadays even amid the worst reaction (as in Paris at present) can simply no longer be smashed. Considering the importance which this organization has attained also in Germany, it would be absolutely necessary in our opinion to mention it in the program and if possible to leave open a place for it in the Party organization.

All this has been done by our people to please the Lassalleans. And what has the other side conceded? That a heap of rather confused *purely democratic demands* should figure in the program, of which several are a mere matter of fashion, as for instance, the "legislation by the people" which exists in Switzerland and does more harm than good if it does anything at all. *Administration* by the people, that would be something. Equally lacking is the first condition of all freedom: that all officials should be responsible for all their official acts to every citizen before the ordinary courts and according to common law. Of the fact that such demands as freedom of science and freedom of conscience figure in every liberal bourgeois program and appear somewhat strange here, I shall say nothing more.

The free people's state is transformed into the free state. Taken in its grammatical sense, a free state is one where the state is free

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<sup>1</sup> Engels refers to Wilhelm Bracke's pamphlet, *Der Lassalle'sche Vorschlag*, [The Lassallean Proposal], published in 1873.—Ed.

in relation to its citizens, hence a state with a despotic government. The whole talk about the state should be dropped, especially since the Commune, which was no longer a state in the proper sense of the word. The "people's state" has been thrown in our faces by the anarchists to the point of disgust, although already Marx's book against Proudhon<sup>1</sup> and later the *Communist Manifesto* directly declare that with the introduction of the socialist order of society the state will dissolve of itself [*sich von selbst auflöst*] and disappear. As, therefore, the state is only a transitional institution which is used in the struggle, in the revolution, in order to hold down one's adversaries by force, it is pure nonsense to talk of a free people's state: so long as the proletariat still *uses* the state, it does not use it in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries, and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom the state as such ceases to exist. We would therefore propose to replace *state* everywhere by "community" [*Gemeinwesen*], a good old German word which can very well represent the French word "*commune*."

"The elimination of all social and political inequality" is also a very questionable phrase in place of "the abolition of all class distinctions." Between one country and another, one province and another and even one locality and another there will always exist a *certain* inequality in the conditions of life, which it will be possible to reduce to a minimum but never entirely remove. Alpine dwellers will always have different conditions of life from those of people living on plains. The idea of socialist society as the realm of equality is a one-sided French idea resting upon the old "liberty, equality, fraternity"—an idea which was justified as a *stage of development* in its own time and place but which, like all the one-sided ideas of the earlier socialist schools, should now be overcome, for they only produce confusion in people's heads and more precise modes of presentation of the matter have been found.

I shall stop, although almost every word in this program, which has, moreover, been composed in a flat and flaccid style, could be criticized. It is of such a character that if adopted Marx and I can *never* give our adherence to the *new* party established on this basis, and shall have very seriously to consider what our attitude towards it—in public as well—should be. You must remember that abroad *we* are made responsible for any and every utterance and action of the German social-democratic workers' party. Thus Bakunin in his work *Statehood and Anarchy*, where we have to answer for every

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<sup>1</sup> *Misère de la Philosophie* [The Poverty of Philosophy]. Reply to Proudhon's *Philosophie de la Misère* [Philosophy of Poverty].—Ed.

thoughtless words spoken or written by Liebknecht since the *Demokratisches Wochenblatt*<sup>1</sup> was started. People like to imagine that we run the whole business from here, while you know as well as I that we have hardly ever interfered in any way in internal Party affairs, and even then only in order to make good, so far as is possible, blunders, and *only theoretical* blunders, which have in our opinion been committed. But you will realize for yourself that this program marks a turning point which may very easily compel us to refuse any and every responsibility for the party which recognizes it.

In general, the official program of a party is of less importance than what the party does. But a *new* program is after all a banner publicly raised, and the outside world judges the party by it. It should, therefore, on no account include a step backwards, as this one does in comparison with the Eisenach program. One should also take into consideration what the workers of other countries will say to this program, what impression will be produced by this bending of the knee to Lassalleanism on the part of the whole German socialist proletariat.

At the same time I am convinced that a union on *this* basis will not last a year. Are the best minds in our Party to lend themselves to grinding out repetitions, learnt by rote, of the Lassallean precepts on the iron law of wages and state aid? I should like to see you doing it, for instance! And if they did do this they would be hissed down by their audiences. And I am sure the Lassalleans will insist on just *these* points of the program like that usurer Shylock on his pound of flesh. The separation will come; but we shall have made Hasselmann, Hasenclever, Tölcke and Co. "honest" again; we shall come out of the separation weaker and the Lassalleans stronger; our Party will have lost its political virginity and will never again be able to come out whole-heartedly against the Lassallean phrases which it will have inscribed for a time on its own banner; and if the Lassalleans then once more say that they are the most genuine, the only workers' party, while our people are bourgeois, the program will be there to prove it. All the socialist measures in it are *theirs*, and all *our* Party has put into it are the demands of the petty-bourgeois democracy, which is nevertheless described *also by it* in the same program as a part of the "reactionary mass."

I had let this letter lie here as after all you are to be freed only on April 1, in honour of Bismarck's birthday, and I did not want to expose it to the chance of being intercepted in any attempt to smuggle

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<sup>1</sup> *Demokratisches Wochenblatt* [*Democratic Weekly*] was edited by W. Liebknecht and published in Leipzig in 1868-69.—Ed.

it in. And now a letter has just come from Bracke, who has also his grave doubts about the program and wants to know our opinion. I am therefore sending this letter to him to be forwarded, so that he can read it and I need not write all this stuff over again. Moreover, I have also told the unvarnished truth to Ramm<sup>1</sup>; to Liebknecht I only wrote briefly. I will not forgive him for never telling us a *single word* about the whole thing (while Ramm and others thought he had given us exact information) until it was too late, so to speak. But this is what he has always done—hence the large amount of disagreeable correspondence which we, both Marx and I, have had with him; but this time it is really too bad and *we are certainly not going to cooperate*.

See that you manage to come here in the summer. You will, of course, stay with me, and if the weather is good we can go to the seaside for a couple of days, from which you will derive a lot of benefit after your long spell in jail.

Your friend,

F. E.

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<sup>1</sup> Hermann Ramm: One of the editors of the newspaper *Volksstat.*—Ed.

## Frederick Engels

### LETTER TO K. KAUTSKY

London, February 23, 1891

Dear Kautsky,

You will have received my hasty congratulations of the day before yesterday. So now to return again to our muttons, Marx's letter.<sup>1</sup>

The fear that it would put a weapon in the hands of our opponents was unfounded. Malicious insinuations, of course, are being attached to anything and everything, but on the whole the impression made on our opponents was one of complete disconcertment at this ruthless self-criticism and the feeling: what an inner power must be possessed by a party that can afford such a thing! That can be seen from the hostile newspapers that you sent me (for which many thanks) and from those to which I have otherwise had access. And, frankly speaking, that really was my intention when I published the document. That at the first moment some persons here and there could not but be unpleasantly affected by it I was aware of, but it was not to be avoided and it was amply outweighed, in my view, by the contents of the document. I knew, also, that the Party was quite strong enough to stand it, and I reckoned that it would today also be able to stomach this unconcealed language used fifteen years ago; that one would point with justifiable pride to this test of strength and would say: Where is there another party that can dare the like? That has been left, meanwhile, to the Saxonian and Vienna *Arbeiter-Zeitung* and to the *Züricher Post*.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The reference is to the *Critique of the Gotha Program*, published upon Engels' insistence in the *Neue Zeit*, the theoretical organ of the German Social-Democratic Party edited by Karl Kautsky.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> Of these papers the first two were social-democratic, the third bourgeois.—*Ed.*

That in No. 21 of the *Neue Zeit* you take upon yourself the responsibility for the publication is very nice of you, but do not forget that after all, I gave the first impulse and moreover to a certain extent I put you in a position in which you had no choice. I claim, therefore, the main responsibility for myself. As far as details are concerned, one can certainly always have different opinions about them. I have deleted and altered everything that you and Dietz have objected to, and if Dietz had marked even more I would still, as far as possible, have been amenable even then, of that I have always given you proof. But, as far as the main point is concerned, it was *my duty* to publish the thing once the program had come up for discussion. And especially now, after Liebknecht's report in Halle, in which he utilizes his extracts from it in part unceremoniously as his own property, and in part as objects of attack without mentioning the source, Marx would certainly have confronted this rehash with the original and it was my duty in his place to do the same. Unfortunately, at that time I had not yet got the document; I only found it considerably later after much search.

You say that Bebel writes to you that Marx's treatment of Lassalle has caused bad blood among the old Lassalleans. That may be so. People, you see, do not know the real story and nothing appears to have happened to enlighten them about it. If these people do not know that Lassalle's whole greatness rests on this, that for years Marx allowed him to parade the results of Marx's research as his own and, owing to defective education in economics, to distort them into the bargain, then that is not my fault. But I am Marx's literary executor and as such I have my duty to perform.

Lassalle has belonged to history for twenty-six years. While under the Exceptional Law historical criticism of him has been left in abeyance, the time is at last at hand when it must have its say and Lassalle's position in relation to Marx be made plain. The legend that conceals and glorifies the true image of Lassalle can surely not become an article of faith of the Party. However highly one may estimate Lassalle's services to the movement, his historical role in it remains an equivocal one. Lassalle the Socialist is accompanied step by step by Lassalle the demagogue. Everywhere, Lassalle, the conductor of the Hatzfeldt law suit,<sup>1</sup> shows through Lassalle the agitator and organizer: the same cynicism in choice of means, the same preference for surrounding himself with suspicious and corrupt people who can be used as mere tools and discarded. Until 1862 a specifically Prussian vulgar democrat in practice, with

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<sup>1</sup> During 1845-54 Lassalle in his capacity as lawyer handled the divorce case of Countess Hatzfeldt.—*Ed.*

strong Bonapartist leanings (I have just looked through his letters to Marx), he suddenly switched round for purely personal reasons and began his agitation; and before two years had gone by he was demanding that the workers should take the part of the monarchy against the bourgeoisie, and intriguing with Bismarck, akin to him in character, in a way that would certainly have led to the actual betrayal of the movement, if fortunately for him he had not been shot in time. In his agitational writings, the correct things that he borrowed from Marx are so much interwoven with his own Lassallean, invariably false expositions that the two are hardly to be separated. The section of the workers that feels itself injured by Marx's judgment knows Lassalle only through his two years of agitation, and even these only through coloured spectacles. But historical criticism cannot stand eternally, hat in hand, before such prejudices. It was my duty finally to settle accounts between Marx and Lassalle. That has been done. For the time being I can content myself with that. Moreover, I myself have other things to do now. And the published ruthless judgment of Marx on Lassalle will by itself have its effect and give others courage. But should I be forced to it, there would be no choice for me: I should have to clear away the Lassalle legend once for all.

That voices have been raised in the Reichstag group<sup>1</sup> saying that the *Neue Zeit* should be placed under censorship is indeed a fine affair. What is this, the ghost of the Reichstag group's dictatorship during the Anti-Socialist Law (which was, of course, necessary and excellently carried out), or is it due to remembrance of von Schweitzer's whilom strict organization? It is in fact a brilliant idea to put German socialist science, after its liberation from Bismarck's Anti-Socialist Law, under a new Socialist Law to be manufactured and carried out by the Social-Democratic Party authorities themselves. For the rest, it is ordained that trees shall not grow into the sky.<sup>2</sup>

The article in the *Vorwärts* does not stir me much.<sup>3</sup> I shall wait for Liebknecht's account of what happened and shall then

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<sup>1</sup> *Reichstag group*: The group of Social-Democratic deputies in the Reichstag.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> A German saying equivalent to the English: "After all, there is a limit to everything."—Ed.

<sup>3</sup> The leading article in the newspaper *Vorwärts* [*For-ward*] (of February 13, 1891), the central organ of the German Social-Democratic Party, expressed the official position of the party executive on Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Program*. The article contained a sharp condemnation of Marx's estimate of Lassalle and considered it a meritorious act on the part of the party that it had accepted the Gotha draft program in spite of Marx's criticism.—Ed.

reply to both in as friendly a tone as possible. In the *Vorwärts* article there are only a few inaccuracies to be corrected (for example, that we did not desire unity, that events proved Marx wrong, etc.) and a few obvious things to be confirmed. With this answer I intend then, for my part, to close the discussion unless new attacks or false assertions compel me to continue.

Tell Dietz that I am working on the *Origin*.<sup>1</sup> But today Fischer writes to me and wants three new prefaces as well!

Yours,

F. E.

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<sup>1</sup> The reference is to the fourth edition of Engels' book *Der Ursprung der Familie, des Privateigentums und des Staats* [*The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*].—Ed.



*Frederick Engels*

## ON SOCIAL RELATIONS IN RUSSIA

On the subject matter proper, Mr. Tkachov tells the German workers that as regards Russia I possess not even a "little knowledge," possess nothing but "ignorance"; and he feels himself, therefore, obliged to explain to them the real state of affairs, and in particular the reasons why just at the present time a social revolution could be made in Russia with the greatest of ease, much more easily than in Western Europe.

"We have no urban proletariat, that is undoubtedly true; but, then, we also have no bourgeoisie; . . . our workers will have to fight only against the *political power*—the *power of capital* is with us still only in embryo. And you, sir, are undoubtedly aware that the fight against the former is much easier than against the latter."

The revolution which modern Socialism strives to achieve is, briefly, the victory of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie, and the establishment of a new organization of society by the destruction of all class distinctions. This requires not only a proletariat that carries out this revolution, but also a bourgeoisie in whose hands the productive forces of society have developed so far that they allow of the final destruction of class distinctions. Among savages and semi-savages there likewise often exist no class distinctions, and every people has passed through such a state. It could not occur to us to re-establish this state, for the simple reason that class distinctions necessarily emerge out of it as the productive forces of society develop. Only at a certain level of development of the productive forces of society, an even very high level for our modern conditions, does it become possible to raise production to such an extent that the abolition of class distinctions can be a real progress, can be lasting without bringing about stagnation or even decline in the mode of social production. But the productive forces have reached this level of development only in the hands of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie, therefore, in this respect also is just as necessary a pre-

condition of the socialist revolution as the proletariat itself. Hence a man who will say that this revolution can be more easily carried out in a country, because, *although* it has no proletariat, it has no bourgeoisie *either*, only proves that he has still to learn the ABC of Socialism.

The Russian workers—and these workers are, as Mr. Tkachov himself says, “tillers of the soil and as such not proletarians but *owners*”—have, therefore, an easier task because they do not have to fight against the power of capital, but “only against the political power,” with the Russian state. And this state “appears only at a distance as a power; . . . it has no roots in the economic life of the people; it does not embody the interests of any particular estate. . . . In your country the state is no imaginary power. It stands four square on the basis of capital; it embodies in itself (!) certain economic interests. . . . In our country the situation is just the reverse—the form of our society owes its existence to the state, to a state hanging in the air, so to speak, one that has nothing in common with the existing social order, and that has its roots in the past, but not in the present.”

Let us waste no time over the confused notion that the economic interests need the state, which they themselves create, in order to acquire a *body*, or over the bold contention that the Russian “form of society (which, of course, must include also the communal property of the peasants) owes its existence to the state,” or over the contradiction that this same state “has nothing in common” with the existing social order which, however, is supposed to be its very own creation. Let us rather examine at once this “state hanging in the air,” which does not represent the interests of even a single estate.

In European Russia the peasants possess 105 million dessiatines, the nobility (as I shall here term the big landowners for the sake of brevity) 100 million dessiatines of land, of which about half belong to 15,000 nobles, who consequently each possess on the average 3,300 dessiatines. The land of the peasants is, therefore, only a trifle bigger than that of the nobles. So you see, the nobles have not the slightest interest in the existence of the Russian state, which protects them in the possession of half the country! To continue. The peasants, from their half, pay 195 million rubles land tax annually, the nobles—13 million! The lands of the nobles are on the average twice as fertile as those of the peasants, because during the settlement for the redemption of the *corvée* the state not only took the greater part but also the best part of the land from the peasants and gave it to the nobles, and for this worst land the peasants had to pay the nobility the price of the best. And the Russian nobility has no interest in the existence of the Russian state!

The peasants—taken in the mass—have been put by the redemption into a most miserable and wholly untenable position. Not only has the greatest and best part of their land been taken from them, that in all the fertile parts of the country the peasant land is too small—under Russian agricultural conditions—for them to be able to make a living from it. Not only were they charged an excessive price for it, advanced to them by the state and for which they now have to pay interest and instalments on the principal to the state. Not only is almost the whole burden of the land tax thrown upon them, while the nobility escapes almost scot-free—so that the land tax alone consumes the entire ground rent value of the peasant land and more, and all further payments which the peasant has to make and which we will speak of immediately are direct deductions from that part of his income which represents his wages. Then, in addition to the land tax, to the interest and amortization payments on the money advanced by the state, since the recent introduction of local administration, there are the provincial and district imposts as well. The most essential consequence of the “reform” was fresh tax burdens for the peasant. The state retained its revenues in their entirety, but passed on a large part of its expenditure to the provinces and districts, which imposed new taxes to meet them, and in Russia it is the rule that the higher estates are almost tax exempt and the peasant pays almost everything.

Such a situation is as if specially created for the usurer, and with the almost unequalled talent of the Russians for trading on a lower level, for taking full advantage of favourable business situations and the swindling inseparable from this—Peter I long ago said that one Russian could get the better of three Jews—the usurer everywhere makes his appearance. When taxes are about to fall due the usurer, the kulak—frequently a rich peasant of the same village community—comes along and offers his ready cash. The peasant must have the money at all costs and is obliged to accept the conditions of the usurer without demur. But this only gets him into a tighter fix, and he needs more and more ready cash. At harvest time the grain dealer arrives; the need for money forces the peasant to sell a part of the grain which he and his family require for their subsistence. The grain dealer spreads false rumours which lowers prices, pays a low price and often even part of this in all sorts of high-priced goods; for the truck system is also highly developed in Russia. It is quite obvious that the great corn exports of Russia are based directly on the starvation of the peasant population. Another method of exploiting the peasant is the following: a speculator rents domain land from the government for a long term of years and cultivates it himself as long as it yields a good crop without

manure; then he divides it up into small plots and lets out the exhausted land at high rents to neighbouring peasants who cannot manage on the income from their allotment. Here we have exactly the Irish middlemen, just as above the English truck system. In short, there is no country in which, in spite of the pristine savagery of bourgeois society, capitalistic parasitism is so developed, so covers and entangles the whole country, the whole mass of the population, with its nets as in Russia. And all these bloodsuckers of the peasants are supposed to have no interest in the existence of the Russian state, whose laws and law courts protect their sleek and profitable practices!

The big bourgeoisie of Petersburg, Moscow, Odessa, which has developed with unheard-of rapidity during the last decade, chiefly due to the railroads, and which cheerfully "went smash" along with the rest during the last swindle years, the grain, hemp, flax and tallow exporters, whose whole business is built up on the misery of the peasants, the entire Russian large-scale industry, which only exists thanks to the protective tariffs granted it by the state—have all these important and rapidly growing elements of the population no interest in the existence of the Russian state? To say nothing of the countless army of officials, which swarms over Russia and plunders it and here constitutes a real social estate. And when Mr. Tkachov assures us the Russian state has "no roots in the economic life of the people," that "it does not embody the interests of any particular estate," that it "hangs in the air," methinks it is not the Russian state that hangs in the air, but rather Mr. Tkachov.

It is clear that the condition of the Russian peasants since the emancipation from serfdom has become intolerable and cannot be maintained much longer, and that for this reason alone if for no other a revolution is in the offing in Russia. The question is only: what can be, what will be the result of this revolution? Mr. Tkachov says it will be a social one. This is pure tautology. Every real revolution is a social one, in that it brings a new class to power and allows it to remodel society in its own image. But he wants to say it will be a socialist one, it will introduce into Russia the form of society aimed at by West European Socialism, even before we in the West succeed in doing so—and that in a condition of society in which both proletariat and bourgeoisie appear only sporadically and at a low stage of development. And this is supposed to be possible because the Russians are, so to speak, the chosen people of Socialism, and have artels and common ownership of land.

The artel, which Mr. Tkachov mentions only incidentally, but which we include here because since the time of Herzen it has played a mysterious role with many Russians—the artel in Russia

is a widespread form of association, the simplest form of free cooperation, such as is to be found for hunting among hunting tribes. Word and content are not of Slavic but of Tatar origin. Both are to be found among the Kirghiz, Yakuts, etc., on the one hand, and among the Lapps, Samoyeds and other Finnish peoples, on the other.<sup>1</sup> That is why the artel developed originally in the North and East, by contact with Finns and Tatars, not in the Southwest. The severe climate makes necessary industrial activity of various kinds, and so the lack of urban development and of capital is replaced, as far as possible, by this form of cooperation. One of the most characteristic features of the artel, the collective responsibility of its members for one another to third parties, was based originally on blood relationship, like the mutual liability [Gewere] of the ancient Germans, the blood vengeance, etc. Moreover, in Russia the word artel is used for every form of not only collective activity but also collective institution. The *Bourse* is also an artel. In workers' artels, an elder (*starosta*, *starshina*) is always chosen who fulfils the functions of treasurer, bookkeeper, etc., and of manager as far as necessary, and receives a special salary. Such artels are formed:

1. For temporary enterprises, after the completion of which they dissolve;
2. For the members of one and the same trade, for instance, porters, etc.;
3. For permanent enterprises, industrial in the proper sense of the word.

They are established by a contract signed by all the members. Now if these members cannot bring together the necessary capital, as very often happens, for instance, in the case of cheeseries and fisheries (for nets, boats, etc.), the artel falls a prey to the usurer, who advances the amount lacking at high interest, and thereafter pockets the greater part of the income from work. Still more shamefully exploited, however, are the artels which hire themselves in a body to an employer as wage labourers. They direct their industrial activity themselves and thus save the capitalist the cost of supervision. The latter lets to the members huts to live in and advances them the means of subsistence, which in turn gives rise to the most disgraceful truck system. Such is the case with the lumbermen and tar distillers in the Archangel *gubernia*, and in many trades in Siberia, etc. (Cf. Flerovsky, *Polozheniye rabochevo klassa v Rossii. The Condition of the Working Class in Russia*, St. Petersburg 1869.) Here then the artel serves to considerably facilitate the exploita-

<sup>1</sup> On the artel, compare *inter alia*: Сборник материалов об артелях в России, С.-Петербург, 1873. Выпуск I. [Note by Engels.]

tion of the wageworker by the capitalist. On the other hand, there are also artels which themselves employ wageworkers, who are *not* members of the association.

It is thus seen that the artel is a cooperative society which has arisen spontaneously and is, therefore, still very undeveloped, and as such neither exclusively Russian nor even Slavic. Such societies are formed wherever the need for them exists. For instance, in Switzerland among the dairy farmers, in England among the fishermen, where they even assume a great variety of forms. The Silesian navvies (Germans, not Poles), who built so many German railroads in the forties, were organized in complete artels. The predominance of this form in Russia proves, it is true, the existence in the Russian people of a strong impulse to associate, but is far from proving their ability to jump, with the aid of this impulse, from the artel straight into the socialist order of society. For that, it is necessary above all that the artel itself should be capable of development, that it shed its primitive form, in which, as we saw, it serves the workers less than it does capital, and rise *at least* to the level of the West European cooperative societies. But if we are to believe Mr. Tkachov for once (which, after all that has preceded, is certainly more than risky), this is by no means the case. On the contrary, he assures us with a pride highly indicative of his standpoint: "As regards the cooperative and credit associations on the German(!) model, recently artificially transplanted to Russia, these have met with complete indifference on the part of the majority of our workers and have been a failure almost everywhere." The modern cooperative society has at least proved that it can run large-scale industry profitably on its own account (spinning and weaving in Lancashire). The artel is so far not only incapable of doing this; it must of necessity even be destroyed by big industry if it does not develop further.

The communal property of the Russian peasants was discovered about the year 1845 by the Prussian Government Councillor Haxthausen and trumpeted to the world as something absolutely wonderful, although Haxthausen could still have found survivals enough of it in his Westphalian homeland, and, as a government official, it was even part of his duty to know them thoroughly. It was from Haxthausen that Herzen, himself a Russian landowner, first learned that his peasants owned the land in common, and he made use of the fact to describe the Russian peasants as the true vehicles of Socialism, as born Communists, in contrast to the workers of the aging, decayed European West, who would first have to go through the ordeal of acquiring Socialism artificially. From Herzen this knowledge came to Bakunin, and from Bakunin to Mr. Tkachov. Let us hear the latter:

"Our people . . . in its great majority . . . is permeated with the principles of common ownership; it is, if one may use the term, instinctively, traditionally communist. The idea of collective property is so closely interwoven with the whole world outlook (we shall see immediately how far the world of the Russian peasant extends) of the Russian people that today, when the government begins to understand that this idea is incompatible with the principles of a 'well-ordered' society, and in the name of these principles wishes to impress the idea of individual property on the consciousness and life of the people, it can succeed in doing so only with the help of the bayonet and the knout. It is clear from this that our people, despite its ignorance, is much nearer to Socialism than the peoples of Western Europe, although the latter are more educated."

In reality communal ownership of the land is an institution which is to be found among all Indo-Germanic peoples on a low level of development, from India to Ireland, and even among the Malays, who are developing under Indian influence, for instance, in Java. As late as 1608, in the newly conquered North of Ireland, the legally established communal ownership of the land served the English as a pretext for declaring the land as ownerless and as escheated to the Crown. In India a whole series of forms of communal property has been in existence down to the present time. In Germany it was general; the communal lands still to be found here and there are a relic of it; and often still distinct traces of it, temporary divisions of the communal lands, etc., are also to be found, especially in the mountains. More exact references and details with regard to old German communal ownership may be consulted in the various writings of *Mauver*, which are classic on this question. In Western Europe, including Poland and Little Russia, at a certain stage in the social development, this communal ownership became a fetter, a brake on agricultural production, and was more and more eliminated. In Great Russia (that is, Russia proper), on the other hand, it has persisted until today, thereby proving in the first place that here agricultural production and the social conditions in the countryside corresponding to it are still very undeveloped, as is actually the case. The Russian peasant lives and has his being only in his village community; the rest of the world exists for him only in so far as it interferes with his village community. This is so much the case that in Russia the same word "*mir*" means, on the one hand, "world" and, on the other, "peasant community." *Ves mir*, the whole world, means to the peasant the meeting of the community members. Hence, when Mr. Tkachov speaks of the "world outlook" of the Russian peasants, he has obviously translated the Russian *mir* incorrectly. Such a complete isolation of the individual communities from one another,

which creates throughout the country similar, but the very opposite of common, interests, is the natural basis for *oriental despotism*, and from India to Russia this form of society, wherever it prevailed, has always produced it and always found its complement in it. Not only the Russian state in general, but even its specific form, tsarist despotism, instead of hanging in the air is the necessary and logical product of Russian social conditions with which, according to Mr. Tkachov, it has "nothing in common"! Further development of Russia in a *bourgeois* direction would here also destroy communal property little by little, without any need for the Russian government to intervene with "bayonet and knout." And this all the more because the communally owned land in Russia is not cultivated by the peasants in common and only the product divided, as is still the case in some districts in India; on the contrary, from time to time the land is divided up among the various heads of families, and each cultivates his allotment for himself. Consequently, great differences in degree of prosperity are possible among the members of the community, and actually exist. Almost everywhere there are a few rich peasants among them—here and there millionaires—who play the usurer and suck the blood of the mass of the peasants. No one knows this better than Mr. Tkachov. While he wants the German workers to believe that the "idea of collective ownership" can be driven out of the Russian peasants, these instinctive, traditional Communists, only by bayonet and knout, he writes on page 15 of his Russian pamphlet: "Among the peasants a class of *usurers* (*kulakov*) is making its way, a class of people who *buy up* and *rent* the lands of peasants and nobles—a muzhik aristocracy." These are the same kind of bloodsuckers as we described more fully above.

What dealt the severest blow to communal ownership was again the redemption of the *corvée*. The greater and better part of the land was allotted to the nobility; for the peasant there remained scarcely enough, often not enough, to live on. In addition the forests were given to the nobles; the wood for fuel, implements and building, which the peasant formerly might fetch there for nothing, he has now to buy. Thus the peasant has nothing now but his house and the bare land, without means to cultivate it, and on the average without enough land to support him and his family from one harvest to the next. Under such conditions and under the pressure of taxes and usurers, communal ownership of the land is no longer a blessing; it becomes a fetter. The peasants often run away from it, with or without their families, to earn their living as migratory labourers, and leave their land behind them.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On the position of the peasants compare *inter alia* the official report of the government commission on agricultural production (1873), and further



It is clear that communal ownership in Russia is long past its period of florescence and to all appearances is moving towards its disintegration. Nevertheless, the possibility undeniably exists of raising this form of society to a higher one, if it should last until circumstances are ripe for that, and if it shows itself capable of development in such manner that the peasants no longer cultivate the land separately, but collectively;<sup>1</sup> of raising it to this higher form without it being necessary for the Russian peasants to go through the intermediate stage of bourgeois small holdings. This, however, can only happen if, before the complete breakup of communal ownership, a proletarian revolution is successfully carried out in Western Europe, creating for the Russian peasant the pre-conditions requisite for such a transition, particularly the material conditions which he needs if only to carry through the revolution necessarily connected therewith of his whole agricultural system. It is, therefore, sheer bounce for Mr. Tkachov to say that the Russian peasants, although "owners," are "nearer to Socialism" than the propertyless workers of Western Europe. Quite the opposite. If anything can still save Russian communal ownership and give it a chance of growing into a new, really viable form, it is a proletarian revolution in Western Europe.

Mr. Tkachov treats the political revolution just as lightly as he does the economic one. The Russian people, he relates, "protests incessantly" against its enslavement, now in the form of "religious sects . . . refusal to pay taxes . . . robber bands (the German workers will be glad to know that, accordingly, Schinderhannes<sup>2</sup> is the father of German Social-Democracy) . . . incendiarism . . . revolts . . . and hence the Russian people may be termed an instinctive revolutionist." And thus Tkachov is convinced that "it is only necessary to evoke an outburst in a number of places at the same time of all the accumulated bitterness and discontent, which . . . is always seething in the breast of our people." Then "the union of the revolutionary forces will come about of itself, and the fight . . . must end favourably for the people's cause. Practical necessity, the instinct of self-preservation," will then achieve

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Скалдин, *В захолустье и в столице*, С.-Петербург, 1870; the latter publication by a liberal conservative. [Note by Engels.]

<sup>1</sup> In Poland, particularly in the Grodno *gubernia*, where the nobility for the most part was ruined by the rebellion of 1863, the peasants now frequently buy or rent estates from the nobles and cultivate them unpartitioned and on their collective account. And these peasants have not had communal ownership for centuries and are not Great Russians, but Poles, Lithuanians and Byelorussians. [Note by Engels].

<sup>2</sup> *Schinderhannes*: nickname of Johann Bückler, a well-known German robber.—Ed.

quite of itself "a firm and indissoluble alliance among the protesting village communities."

It is impossible to conceive of a revolution on easier and more pleasant terms. One starts shooting, at three or four places simultaneously, and the "instinctive revolutionist," "practical necessity" and the "instinct of self-preservation" do the rest "of themselves." Being so dead easy, it is simply incomprehensible why the revolution has not long ago been made, the people liberated and Russia transformed into the model socialist country.

Actually, it is quite a different matter. The Russian people, this instinctive revolutionist, has, true enough, made numerous isolated peasant revolts against the *nobility* and against individual officials, but *never against the tsar*, except when a *false tsar* put himself at its head and claimed the throne. The last great peasant rising, under Catherine II, was only possible because Emelyan Pugachev claimed to be her husband, Peter III, who allegedly had not been murdered by his wife, but dethroned and clapped in prison, and who had now escaped. The tsar is, on the contrary, the earthly god of the Russian peasant: *Bog vysok, tsar dalyok*—God is on high and the tsar far away, is his cry in the hour of need. There is no doubt that the mass of the peasant population, especially since the redemption of the *corvée*, has been reduced to a condition which more and more forces on it a fight also against the government and the tsar; but Mr. Tkachov will have to try to sell his fairy tale of the "instinctive revolutionist" somewhere else.

And then, even *if* the mass of the Russian peasants were ever so instinctively revolutionary, even *if* we imagined that revolutions could be made to order, just as one makes a piece of flowered calico or a teakettle—even then I ask, is it permissible for one over twelve years of age to imagine the course of a revolution in such an utterly childish manner as is the case here? And remember further that this was written after the first revolution made on this Bakunin model—the Spanish one of 1873—had so brilliantly failed. There, too, they let loose at several places simultaneously. There too it was calculated that practical necessity and the instinct of self-preservation would of themselves bring about a firm and indissoluble alliance between the protesting communities. And what happened? Every village community, every town only defended itself, there was no question of mutual assistance, and with only three thousand men Pavia overcame one town after another in a fortnight and put an end to the entire anarchist glory. (Cf. my *Bakunists at Work*, where this is described in detail.)

Russia undoubtedly is on the eve of a revolution. Her financial affairs are in extreme disorder. Taxes cannot be screwed any higher,

old *orbis terrarum*<sup>1</sup> were pierced; only now was the world really discovered and the basis laid for subsequent world trade and the transition of handicraft to manufacture, which in its turn formed the starting point for modern large-scale industry. The spiritual dictatorship of the Church was shattered; it was directly cast off by the majority of the Germanic peoples, who adopted Protestantism, while among the Latins a cheerful spirit of free thought, taken over from the Arabs and nourished by the newly-discovered Greek philosophy, took root more and more and prepared the way for the materialism of the eighteenth century.

It was the greatest progressive revolution that mankind had so far experienced, a time which called for giants and produced giants—giants in power of thought, passion and character, in universality and learning. The men who founded the modern rule of the bourgeoisie had anything but bourgeois limitations. On the contrary, the adventurous character of the time imbued them to a greater or less degree. There was hardly any man of importance then living who had not travelled extensively, who did not command four or five languages, who did not shine in a number of fields. Leonardo da Vinci was not only a great painter but also a great mathematician, mechanic and engineer, to whom the most diverse branches of physics are indebted for important discoveries; Albrecht Dürer was painter, engraver, sculptor, architect, and in addition invented a system of fortification embodying many of the ideas that much later were again taken up by Montalembert and the modern German science of fortification. Machiavelli was statesman, historian, poet, and at the same time the first notable military author of modern times. Luther not only cleansed the Augean stable of the Church but also that of the German language; he created modern German prose and composed the text and melody of that triumphal hymn which became the *Marseillaise* of the sixteenth century. For the heroes of that time had not yet come under the servitude of the division of labour, the restricting effects of which, with their production of onesidedness, we so often notice in their successors. But what is especially characteristic of them is that they almost all pursue their lives and activities in the midst of the contemporary movements, in the practical struggle; they take sides and join in the fight, one by speaking and writing, another with the sword, many with both. Hence the fullness and force of character that makes them complete men. Men of the study are the exception: either persons of second or third rank or cautious philistines who do not want to burn their fingers.

<sup>1</sup> *Orbis terrarum*: Literally, orb of lands, the term used by the ancient Romans for the earth.—Ed.

At that time natural science too was moving in the midst of the general revolution and was itself thoroughly revolutionary; for it had to fight for and win its right of existence. Side by side with the great Italians from whom modern philosophy dates, it provided its martyrs for the stake and the prisons of the Inquisition. And it is characteristic that Protestants outdid Catholics in persecuting the free investigation of nature. Calvin burnt Servetus when the latter was on the point of discovering the course of the circulation of the blood, and indeed he kept him roasting alive during two hours; for the Inquisition at least it sufficed to simply burn Giordano Bruno.

The revolutionary act by which natural science declared its independence and, as it were, repeated Luther's burning of the Bull was the publication of the immortal work by which Copernicus, though timidly and, so to speak, only from his deathbed, threw down the gauntlet to ecclesiastical authority in the affairs of nature. The emancipation of natural science from theology dates from that time, although the fighting out of the particular reciprocal claims has dragged out up to our day and in some minds is still far from completion. Thenceforward, however, the development of the sciences proceeded with giant strides, and, it might be said, gained in force in proportion to the square of the distance (in time) from its point of departure. It was as if the world were to be shown that henceforth the law of motion valid for the highest product of organic matter, the human mind, is the converse of that for inorganic substance.

The main work in the first period of natural science that now opened lay in mastering the material immediately at hand. In most fields a start had to be made from the very beginning. Antiquity had bequeathed Euclid and the Ptolemaic solar system; the Arabs had left behind the decimal notation, the beginnings of algebra, the modern numerals, and alchemy; the Christian Middle Ages nothing at all. Of necessity, in this situation the most elementary natural science, the mechanics of terrestrial and heavenly bodies, occupied first place, and alongside of it, as handmaiden to it, the discovery and perfecting of mathematical methods. Great work was achieved here. At the end of the period, characterized by Newton and Linnaeus, we find these branches of science brought to a certain conclusion. The basic features of the most essential mathematical methods were established: analytical geometry chiefly by Descartes, logarithms by Napier, and differential and integral calculus by Leibniz and perhaps Newton. The same holds good of the mechanics of solid bodies, the main laws of which were made clear once for all. Finally, in the astronomy of the solar system Kepler discovered the laws of planetary movement and Newton formulated them from the

point of view of general laws of motion of matter. The other branches of natural science were far from arriving at even this preliminary conclusion. Only towards the end of the period did the mechanics of fluid and gaseous bodies receive further treatment. <Torricelli in connection with the regulation of the Alpine mountain streams.><sup>1</sup> Physics proper had still not gone beyond its first beginnings, with the exception of optics, the exceptional progress of which was due to the practical needs of astronomy. By the phlogistic theory,<sup>2</sup> chemistry was only just emancipating itself from alchemy. Geology had not yet gone beyond the embryonic stage of mineralogy; hence paleontology could not yet exist at all. Finally, in the field of biology, the essential preoccupation was still with the collection and first sifting of the immense material, not only botanical and zoological but also anatomical and physiological proper. There could as yet be hardly any talk of the comparison of the various forms of life among themselves, of the investigation of their geographical distribution and their climatological, etc., living conditions. Here only botany and zoology arrived at an approximate conclusion owing to Linnaeus.

But what especially characterizes this period is the elaboration of a peculiar general outlook, in which the central point is the view of the *absolute immutability of nature*. In whatever way nature itself might have come into being, once present it remained as it was as long as it existed. The planets and their satellites, once set in motion by the mysterious "first impulse," circled on and on in their prescribed ellipses for all eternity or at any rate until the end of all things. The stars remained forever fixed and immovable in their places, keeping one another therein by "universal gravitation." The earth had persisted without alteration from all eternity or, if you prefer, from the day of its creation. The "five continents" of the present day had always existed, and they had always had the same mountains, valleys and rivers, the same climate, the same flora and fauna, except in so far as change or transplantation had taken place at the hand of man. The species of plants and animals had been established once for all when they came into existence; like continually produced like, and it was a good deal for Linnaeus to have conceded that possibly here and there new species might have arisen by crossing. In contrast to the history of mankind, which develops in time, there was ascribed to the history of nature

<sup>1</sup> Engels' annotations in the margin of the ms. are given here and elsewhere in special brackets.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> *Phlogistic Theory*: The theory prevailing in chemistry during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that combustion takes place due to the presence in certain bodies of a special substance named phlogiston.—Ed.

only an unfolding in space. All change, all development in nature, was negated. Natural science, so revolutionary at the outset, suddenly found itself confronted by an out-and-out conservative nature, in which even today everything was as it had been at the beginning and in which—to the end of the world or for all eternity—everything was to remain as it had been since the beginning.

High as the natural science of the first half of the eighteenth century stood above Greek antiquity in knowledge and even in the sifting of its material, it stood just as low beneath it in the ideological mastery of this material, in the general outlook on nature. For the Greek philosophers the world was essentially something that had emerged from chaos, something that had developed, something that had become. For the natural scientists of the period that we are dealing with it was something ossified, something unalterable, and for most of them something that had been made at one stroke. Science was still deeply enmeshed in theology. Everywhere it sought and found as the ultimate thing an impulse from outside that was not to be explained from nature itself. Even if attraction, by Newton pompously baptised universal gravitation, was conceived as an essential property of matter, whence came the unexplained tangential force which gave rise to the orbits of the planets? How did the innumerable species of animals and plants come into being? And how, above all, did man arise, since after all it was certain that he did not exist from all eternity? To such questions natural science only too frequently answered by making the creator of all things responsible. Copernicus, at the beginning of the period, dismisses all theology; Newton closes the period with the postulate of a divine first impulse. The highest general idea to which this natural science attained was that of the purposiveness of the arrangements of nature, the shallow teleology of Wolff, according to which cats were created to eat mice, mice to be eaten by cats, and the whole of nature to testify to the wisdom of the creator. It is to the highest credit of the philosophy of the time that it did not let itself be led astray by the limited state of contemporary natural knowledge, that—from Spinoza to the great French materialists—it insisted on explaining the world from the world itself and left the justification in detail to the natural science of the future.

I include the materialists of the eighteenth century in this period because no natural scientific material was available to them other than that above described. Kant's epoch-making work remained a secret to them, and Laplace came long after them. We should not forget that this obsolete outlook on nature, although riddled through and through by the progress of science, dominated the entire first

half of the nineteenth century, and in substance is even now still taught in all schools.<sup>1</sup>

The first breach in this petrified outlook on nature was made not by a natural scientist but by a philosopher. In 1755 appeared Kant's *General Natural History and Theory of the Heavens*. The question of the first impulse was eliminated; the earth and the whole solar system appeared as something that had *become* in the course of time. If the great majority of the natural scientists had had a little less of the repugnance to thinking that Newton expressed in the warning: "Physics, beware of metaphysics!", they would have been compelled from this single brilliant discovery of Kant's to draw conclusions that would have spared them endless deviations and immeasurable amounts of time and labour wasted in false directions. For Kant's discovery contained the point of departure for all further progress. If the earth was something that had become, then its present geological, geographical and climatic state, and its plants and animals likewise must be something that had become; it must have a history not only of coexistence in space but also of succession in time. If at once further investigations had been resolutely pursued in this direction, natural science would now be considerably further advanced than it is. But what good could come of philosophy? Kant's work remained without immediate results, until many years later Laplace and Herschel expounded its content and substantiated it in greater detail, thereby gradually securing recognition for the "nebular hypothesis."<sup>2</sup> Further discoveries finally brought it victory; the most important of these were: the proper motion of the fixed stars, the demonstration of a resistant medium in cosmic space, the proof furnished by spectral analysis of the chemical identity of cosmic matter and the existence of such

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<sup>1</sup> How tenaciously even in 1861 this view could be held by a man whose scientific achievements had provided highly important material for abolishing it is shown by the following classic words:

"All the arrangements of our solar system, so far as we are capable of comprehending them, aim at preservation of what exists and at unchanging continuance. Just as since the most ancient times no animal and no plant on earth has become more perfect or in general different, just as we find in all organisms only stages *alongside* of one another and not *following* one another, just as our own race has always remained the same in corporeal respects—so even the greatest diversity in the coexisting cosmic bodies will not justify us in assuming that these forms are merely different stages of development; on the contrary, everything created is *equally* perfect in itself." (Mädler, *Popular Astronomy*, Berlin 1861, 5th edition, p. 316.) [Note by Engels.]

The book referred to is, in full, J. H. Mädler, *Der Wunderbau des Weltalls oder populäre Astronomie* [The Marvellous Edifice of the Cosmos, or Popular Astronomy], 5 Aufl. Berlin 1861.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> *Nebular Hypothesis*: The hypothesis that the heavenly bodies originated from incandescent nebulae.—Ed.

incandescent nebular masses as Kant had postulated. <Retarding action of tides on rotation, also by Kant, understood only now.>

It is, however, permissible to doubt whether the majority of natural scientists would so soon have become conscious of the contradiction of a changing earth that supposedly bore immutable organisms, had not the dawning conception that nature does not just *exist*, but *comes into being* and *goes out of being*, derived support from another quarter. Geology arose and pointed out, not only the terrestrial strata formed one after another and deposited one upon another, but also the shells and skeletons of extinct animals and the trunks, leaves and fruits of no longer existing plants contained in these strata. One had to make up one's mind to acknowledge that not only the earth as a whole but also its present surface and the plants and animals living on it possessed a history in time. At first the acknowledgment occurred reluctantly enough. Cuvier's theory of the revolutions of the earth was revolutionary in phrase and reactionary in substance. In place of a single divine creation it put a whole series of repeated acts of creation, made the miracle an essential lever of nature. Lyell first brought sense into geology by substituting for the sudden revolutions due to the moods of the creator the gradual effects of a slow transformation of the earth.<sup>1</sup>

Lyell's theory was even more incompatible than any of its predecessors with the assumption of constant organic species. Gradual transformation of the earth's surface and of all conditions of life led directly to gradual transformation of the organisms and their adaptation to the changing environment, to the variability of species. But tradition is a power not only in the Catholic Church but also in natural science. For years Lyell himself did not see the contradiction, and his pupils still less. This is only to be explained by the division of labour that had meanwhile become dominant in natural science, which more or less restricted each person to his special sphere, there being only a few whom it did not rob of a comprehensive view.

Meanwhile physics had made mighty advances, the results of which were summed up almost simultaneously by three different persons in the year 1842, which was epoch-making for this branch of natural science. Mayer in Heilbronn and Joule in Manchester demonstrated the transformation of heat into mechanical energy and of

<sup>1</sup> The defect of Lyell's view—at least in its first form—lay in conceiving the forces at work on the earth as constant, constant in quality and quantity. The cooling off of the earth does not exist for him; the earth does not develop in a definite direction but merely changes in an inconsequent, fortuitous manner. [Note by Engels.]



mechanical energy into heat. The determination of the mechanical equivalent of heat put this result beyond question. Simultaneously, by simply working up the separate physical results already arrived at, Grove—not a natural scientist by profession but an English lawyer—proved that all so-called physical energy, mechanical energy, heat, light, electricity, magnetism, indeed even so-called chemical energy, become transformed into one another under definite conditions without any loss of energy occurring, and so proved subsequently, along physical lines, Descartes' principle that the quantity of motion present in the world is constant. With that the special physical energies, the as it were invariable "species" of physics, were resolved into variously differentiated forms of motion of matter, passing into one another according to definite laws. The fortuitousness of the existence of so and so much physical energy was eliminated from science by the proof of their interconnections and transitions. Physics, like astronomy before it, had arrived at a result that necessarily pointed to the eternal cycle of matter in motion as the ultimate conclusion.

The wonderfully rapid development of chemistry, since Lavoisier, and especially since Dalton, attacked the old conceptions of nature from another aspect. The preparation by inorganic means of compounds that hitherto had been produced only in the living organism proved that the laws of chemistry have the same validity for organic as for inorganic bodies, and to a large extent bridged the gulf between inorganic and organic nature, a gulf that Kant still regarded as forever impassable.

Finally, in the sphere of biological research also, mainly the scientific journeys and expeditions that had been systematically organized since the middle of the previous century, the more thorough exploration of the European colonies in all parts of the world by specialists living there, and further the progress of paleontology, anatomy, and physiology in general, particularly since the systematic use of the microscope and the discovery of the cell, had accumulated so much material that the application of the comparative method became possible and at the same time necessary. <Embriology.> On the one hand, the conditions of life of the various floras and faunas were determined by means of comparative physical geography; on the other hand, the various organisms were compared with one another according to their homologous organs, and this not only in their mature condition but at all stages of their development. The more deeply and exactly this research was carried on, the more did the rigid system of an unchangeably fixed organic nature crumble away at its touch. Not only did separate species of plants and animals become more and more indistinguishably blended, but animals turned up,

such as the *amphioxus*<sup>1</sup> and *lepidosiren*,<sup>2</sup> that made a mockery of all previous classification (<*Ceratodus*.<sup>3</sup> Ditto *archeopteryx*,<sup>4</sup> etc.>; and finally organisms were encountered of which it was not even possible to say whether they belonged to the vegetable or animal kingdom. More and more the gaps in the paleontological record were filled up, compelling even the most reluctant to acknowledge the striking parallelism between the evolutionary history of the organic world as a whole and that of the individual organism, the Ariadne's thread that was to lead the way out of the labyrinth in which botany and zoology appeared to have become more and more deeply lost. It was characteristic that, almost simultaneously with Kant's attack on the eternity of the solar system, K. F. Wolff in 1759 launched the first attack on the fixity of species and proclaimed the theory of descent. But what in his case was still only a brilliant anticipation took firm shape in the hands of Oken, Lamarck, Baer, and was victoriously carried through by Darwin in 1859, exactly a hundred years later. Almost simultaneously it was established that protoplasm and the cell, which had already been shown to be the ultimate morphological constituents of all organisms, occurred as the lowest organic forms living independently. This not only reduced the gulf between inorganic and organic nature to a minimum but removed one of the most essential difficulties that had previously stood in the way of the theory of descent of organisms. The new conception of nature was complete in its main features: all rigidity was dissolved, all fixity dissipated, all particularity that had been regarded as eternal became transient, the whole of nature shown as moving in eternal flux and cycles.

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Thus we have once again returned to the mode of contemplation of the great founders of Greek philosophy: that all nature, from the smallest thing to the biggest, from grains of sand to suns, from protista to man, has its existence in eternal coming into being and going out of being, in ceaseless flux, in unresting motion and change. Only with the essential difference that what for the Greeks was a brilliant intuition is in our case the result of strictly scientific

<sup>1</sup> *Amphioxus* (lancelet): A small fish-like animal, about 5 cm. long, found in the Indian and Pacific oceans near the shores of the Malayan Archipelago and Japan, in the Mediterranean and Black seas, and elsewhere. It is a transition form from invertebrates to vertebrates.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> *Lepidosiren*: A lung-fish, equipped with both fins and lungs, found in South America.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup> *Ceratodus*: A lung-fish found in Australia.—Ed.

<sup>4</sup> *Archeopteryx*: An extinct animal, the prototype of the class of birds having at the same time some of the characteristics of reptiles.—Ed.

research in accordance with experience, and hence appears in much more definite and clearer form. To be sure, the empirical proof of this cyclical motion is not wholly free from gaps, but these are insignificant in comparison with what has already been firmly established, and with each year they become more and more filled up. And how could the proof in detail be otherwise than incomplete when one bears in mind that the most essential branches of science—trans-planetary astronomy, chemistry, geology—have a scientific existence of barely a hundred years, and the comparative method in physiology one of barely fifty years, and that the basic form of almost all vital development, the cell, is a discovery not yet forty years old!

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The innumerable suns and solar systems of our cosmic island, bounded by the outermost stellar rings of the Milky Way, developed by contraction and cooling from swirling, glowing masses of vapour, the laws of motion of which will perhaps be disclosed after the observations of some centuries have given us an insight into the proper motion of the stars. Obviously, this development did not proceed everywhere at the same rate. The existence of dark, not merely planetary bodies, hence extinct suns in our stellar system, more and more suggests itself on astronomy (Mädler); on the other hand (according to Secchi), a part of the vaporous nebular patches belong to our stellar system as suns not yet completed, whereby it is not excluded that other nebulae, as Mädler maintains, are distant independent cosmic islands, the relative stage of development of which must be determined by the spectroscope.

How a solar system develops from a separate nebular mass has been shown in detail by Laplace in a manner still unsurpassed; subsequent science has more and more confirmed him.

On the separate bodies so formed—suns as well as planets and satellites—the form of motion of matter at first prevailing is that which we call heat. There can be no question of chemical compounds of the elements even at a temperature like that still possessed by the sun; the extent to which heat is transformed into electricity or magnetism under such conditions continued solar observations will show; it is already as good as proved that the mechanical motion taking place on the sun arises solely from the conflict of heat with gravity.

The smaller the separate bodies, the quicker they cool off. Satellites, asteroids and meteors first of all, just as our moon has long been extinct. The planets more slowly, the central body slowest of all.

With progressive cooling the interplay of the physical forms of motion which become transformed into one another comes more and more to the forefront, until finally a point is reached at which chemical affinity begins to make itself felt, the previously chemically indifferent elements become differentiated, chemically, one after another, obtain chemical properties, and enter into combinations with one another. These combinations change continually with the decreasing temperature, which affects differently not only each element but also each separate combination of elements, changing also with the consequent passage of part of the gaseous matter first to the liquid and then the solid state, and with the new conditions thus created.

The period when the planet has a firm shell and accumulations of water on its surface coincides with that when its intrinsic heat diminishes more and more in comparison with the heat emitted to it from the central body. Its atmosphere becomes the arena of meteorological phenomena in the sense in which we now understand the word; its surface becomes the arena of geological changes in which the deposits resulting from atmospheric precipitation gain increasing preponderance over the slowly decreasing external effects of the incandescent fluid interior.

If, finally, the temperature becomes so far equalized that over a considerable portion of the surface at least it does not exceed the limits within which albumen is capable of life, then, if other chemical preconditions are favourable, living protoplasm forms. What these preconditions are we do not yet know, which is not to be wondered at since so far not even the chemical formula of albumen has been established—we do not even know how many chemically different albuminous bodies there are—and since only about ten years ago the fact became known that completely structureless albumen exercises all the essential functions of life: digestion, excretion, movement, contraction, reaction to stimuli, and reproduction.

Thousands of years may have passed before the conditions arose in which the next advance could take place and this formless albumen produce the first cell by formation of nucleus and membrane. But this first cell also provided the foundation for the morphological development of the whole organic world; the first to develop, as it is permissible to assume from the whole analogy of the paleontological record, were innumerable species of non-cellular and cellular protista, of which the *Eozoon canadense*<sup>1</sup> alone has come down to us,

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<sup>1</sup> *Eozoon canadense*: A mineral found in Canada that used to be considered the fossils of the earliest primitive organisms. In 1878 Karl Möbius disproved the organic origin of this mineral.—Ed.

and of which some gradually differentiated into the first plants and others into the first animals. And from the first animals there developed, essentially by further differentiation, the numerous classes, orders, families, genera and species of animals; and lastly vertebrates, the form in which the nervous system attains its fullest development; and among these again lastly that vertebrate animal in which nature attains consciousness of itself—man.

Man, too, arises by differentiation. Not only individually, differentiated out of a single egg cell to the most complicated organism that nature produces—no, also historically. When after thousands of years of struggle the differentiation of hand from foot, and erect gait, were finally established, man became distinct from the monkey and the basis was laid for the development of articulate speech and the mighty development of the brain that has since made the gulf between man and monkey unbridgeable. The specialization of the hand—this implies the *tool*, and the tool implies specifically human activity, the transforming reaction of man on nature, production. Animals in the narrower sense also have tools, but only as limbs of their bodies: the ant, the bee, the beaver; animals also produce, but their productive effect on surrounding nature in relation to the latter amounts to nothing at all. Man alone has succeeded in impressing his stamp on nature, not only by shifting plants and animals from one place to another, but also by so altering the aspect and climate of his dwelling place, and even the plants and animals themselves, that the consequences of his activity can disappear only with the general extinction of the terrestrial globe. And he has accomplished this primarily and essentially by means of the *hand*. Even the steam engine, so far his most powerful tool for the transformation of nature, depends, because it is a tool, in the last resort on the hand. But step by step with the development of the hand went that of the brain; came consciousness, first of all of the conditions for producing separate practically useful results, and later, among the more favoured peoples and arising from the preceding, insight into the natural laws governing them. And with the rapidly growing knowledge of the laws of nature the means for reacting on nature also grew; the hand alone would never have achieved the steam engine if the brain of man had not developed correlatively with and alongside of it, and partly owing to it.

With man we enter *history*. Animals also have a history, that of their derivation and gradual evolution to their present state. This history, however, is made for them, and in so far as they themselves take part in it, this occurs without their knowledge or desire. On the other hand, the more that human beings become removed from animals in the narrower sense of the word, the more they make their

history themselves, consciously, the less becomes the influence of unforeseen effects and uncontrolled forces on this history, and the more accurately does the historical result correspond to the aim laid down in advance. If, however, we apply this measure to human history, to that of even the most developed peoples of the present day, we find that there still exists here a colossal discrepancy between the proposed aims and the results arrived at, that unforeseen effects predominate, and that the uncontrolled forces are far more powerful than those set into motion according to plan. And this cannot be otherwise as long as the most essential historical activity of men, the one which has raised them from bestiality to humanity and which forms the material foundation of all their other activities, namely, the production of their means of subsistence, that is, today, social production, is particularly subject to the interplay of unintended effects of uncontrolled forces and achieves its desired end only by way of exception and, much more frequently, the exact opposite. In the most advanced industrial countries we have subdued the forces of nature and pressed them into the service of mankind; we have thereby infinitely multiplied production, so that a child now produces more than a hundred adults previously. And what is the consequence? Increasing overwork and increasing misery of the masses, and every ten years a great crash. Darwin did not know what a bitter satire he wrote on mankind, and especially on his countrymen, when he showed that free competition, the struggle for existence, which the economists celebrate as the highest historical achievement, is the normal state of the *animal kingdom*. Only conscious organization of social production, in which production and distribution are carried on in a planned way, can elevate mankind above the rest of the animal world socially in the same way that production in general has done this for men specifically. Historical development makes such an organization daily more indispensable, but also with every day more possible. From it will date a new epoch of history, in which mankind itself, and with mankind all branches of its activity, and especially natural science, will experience an advance before which everything preceding it will pale into insignificance.

Nevertheless, all that comes into being deserves to perish.<sup>1</sup> Millions of years may elapse, hundreds of thousands of generations be born and die, but inexorably the time will come when the failing warmth of the sun will no longer suffice to melt the ice thrusting itself forward from the poles; when the human race, crowding more and more about the equator, will finally no longer find even there

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<sup>1</sup> Mephistopheles in Goethe's *Faust*.—Ed.

enough heat for life; when gradually even the last trace of organic life will vanish; and the earth, an extinct frozen globe like the moon, will circle in deepest darkness and in an ever narrower orbit about the equally extinct sun, and at last fall into it. Other planets will have preceded it, others will follow it; instead of the bright, warm solar system with its harmonious arrangement of members, only a cold, dead sphere will still pursue its lonely path through cosmic space. And what will happen to our solar system will happen sooner or later to all the other systems of our cosmic island, will happen to those of all the other innumerable cosmic islands, even to those the light of which will never reach the earth while there is a living human eye to receive it.

And when such a solar system has completed its life history and succumbs to the fate of all that is finite, death, what then? Will the sun's corpse roll on for all eternity as a corpse through infinite space, and all the once infinitely diversely differentiated natural forces pass forever into one single form of motion, attraction? "Or"—as Secchi asks (p. 810)—"do forces exist in nature which can reconvert the dead system into its original state of an incandescent nebula and reawake it to new life? We do not know."

At all events we do not know in the sense that we know that  $2 \times 2 = 4$  or that the attraction of matter increases and decreases according to the square of the distance. In theoretical natural science, however, which as far as possible builds up its view of nature into a harmonious whole, and without which nowadays even the most thoughtless empiricist cannot get anywhere, we have very often to reckon with incompletely known magnitudes; and logical consistency of thought has had to help at all times to get over defective knowledge. Modern natural science has had to take over from philosophy the principle of the indestructibility of motion; it can no longer exist without this principle. But the motion of matter is not merely crude mechanical motion, mere change of place; it is heat and light, electric and magnetic stress, chemical combination and dissociation, life and, finally, consciousness. To say that matter during the whole unlimited time of its existence has only once, and for what is an infinitesimally short period in comparison with its eternity, found itself able to differentiate its motion and thereby to unfold the whole wealth of this motion, and that before and after this remains restricted for all eternity to mere change of place—this is equivalent to maintaining that matter is mortal and motion transitory. The indestructibility of motion cannot be merely quantitative, it must also be conceived qualitatively; matter whose purely mechanical change of place includes indeed the possibility of being transformed under favourable conditions into heat, electricity, chemical action,

life, but which is not capable of producing these conditions from out of itself, such matter has *forfeited motion*; motion which has lost the capacity of being transformed into the various forms appropriate to it may indeed still have *dynamis*<sup>1</sup> but no longer *energeia*,<sup>2</sup> and so has become partially destroyed. Both, however, are unthinkable.

This much is certain: there was a time when the matter of our cosmic island had transformed such a quantity of motion—of what kind we do not yet know—into heat that there could be developed from it the solar systems appertaining to (according to Mädler) at least twenty million stars, the gradual extinction of which is likewise certain. How did this transformation take place? We know that just as little as Father Secchi knows whether the future *caput mortuum*<sup>3</sup> of our solar system will ever again be converted into the raw material for new solar systems. But here either we must have recourse to a creator or we are forced to the conclusion that the incandescent raw material for the solar systems of our cosmic island was produced in a natural way by transformations of motion which are *by nature inherent* in moving matter, and the conditions of which, therefore, must be reproduced by matter, even if only after millions and millions of years, more or less accidentally, but with the necessity that is also inherent in accident.

The possibility of such a transformation is more and more being conceded. The view is being arrived at that the heavenly bodies are ultimately destined to fall into one another, and one even calculates the amount of heat which must be developed on such collisions. The sudden flaring up of new stars, and the equally sudden increase in brightness of familiar ones, of which we are informed by astronomy, is most easily explained by such collisions. Not only does our group of planets move about the sun, and our sun within our cosmic island, but our whole cosmic island also moves in space in temporary, relative equilibrium with the other cosmic islands, for even the relative equilibrium of freely floating bodies can only exist where the motion is reciprocally conditioned; and it is assumed by many that the temperature in cosmic space is not everywhere the same. Finally, we know that, with the exception of an infinitesimal portion, the heat of the innumerable suns of our cosmic island vanishes into space and fails to raise the temperature of cosmic space even by a millionth of a degree centigrade. What becomes of all this enormous quantity of

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<sup>1</sup> *Dynamis*: Potentiality.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> *Energeia*: Effectiveness.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup> *Caput mortuum*: Literally—dead head; here in the sense of dead remnants.—Ed.



heat? Is it forever dissipated in the attempt to heat cosmic space, has it ceased to exist practically, and does it continue to exist only theoretically, in the fact that cosmic space has become warmer by a decimal fraction of a degree beginning with ten or more noughts? Such an assumption denies the indestructibility of motion; it admits of the possibility that by the cosmic bodies successively falling into one another all existing mechanical motion will be converted into heat and the latter radiated into cosmic space, so that in spite of all "indestructibility of force" all motion in general would have ceased. (Incidentally it is seen here how inaccurate is the term: indestructibility of force, instead of: indestructibility of motion.) Hence we arrive at the conclusion that in some way, which it will some time later be the task of natural science to demonstrate, the heat radiated into cosmic space must be able to become transformed into another form of motion, in which it can once more be stored up and rendered active. Thereby the chief difficulty in the way of the reconversion of extinct suns into incandescent vapour disappears.

For the rest, the eternally repeated succession of worlds in infinite time is only the logical complement to the coexistence of innumerable worlds in infinite space—a principle the necessity of which even the anti-theoretical Yankee brain of Draper was forced to admit.<sup>1</sup>

It is an eternal cycle in which matter moves, a cycle that certainly only completes its orbit in periods of time for which our terrestrial year is no adequate measure, a cycle in which the time of highest development, the time of organic life, and still more that of the life of beings conscious of themselves and of nature, is just as scantily meted out as the space in which life and self-consciousness come into operation; a cycle in which every finite mode of existence of matter, whether it be sun or nebular vapour, single animal or genus of animals, chemical combination or dissociation, is equally transient, and wherein nothing is eternal but eternally changing, eternally moving matter and the laws according to which it moves and changes. But however often, and however relentlessly, this cycle is completed in time and space, however many millions of suns and earths may come into being and go out of being, however long it may take before the conditions for organic life are brought about in a solar system even on a single planet, however innumerable the organic beings that

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<sup>1</sup> "The multiplicity of worlds in infinite space leads to the conception of a succession of worlds in infinite time." Draper, *Hist. Int. Devel.* II, p. [325]. [Note by Engels.]

J. W. Draper, *History of the Intellectual Development of Europe*, vols. I-II, London 1864.—Ed.

have to precede and first pass away before animals with a brain capable of thought develop from their midst, and for a short span of time find conditions suitable for life, only to be exterminated later without mercy, we have the certainty that matter remains eternally the same in all its transformations, that none of its attributes can ever be lost, and therefore, also, that with the same iron necessity with which it will again exterminate on the earth its highest creation, the thinking mind, it must somewhere else and at another time again engender it.

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## THE PART PLAYED BY LABOUR IN THE TRANSITION FROM APE TO MAN

Labour is the source of all wealth, the political economists assert. It is this—next to nature, which supplies it with the material that it converts into wealth. But it is even infinitely more than this. It is the prime basic condition for all human existence, and this to such an extent that, in a sense, we have to say that labour created man himself.

Many hundreds of thousands of years ago, during an epoch, not yet definitely determinable, of that period of the earth's history which geologists call the Tertiary period, most likely towards the end of it, a specially highly-developed race of anthropoid apes lived somewhere in the tropical zone—probably on a great continent that has now sunk to the bottom of the Indian Ocean. Darwin has given us an approximate description of these ancestors of ours. They were completely covered with hair, they had beards and pointed ears, and they lived in bands in the trees.

Presumably as an immediate consequence of their mode of life, which in climbing assigns different functions to the hands than to the feet, these apes when walking on level ground began to disaccustom themselves to the aid of their hands and to adopt a more and more erect gait. This was *the decisive step in the transition from ape to man*.

All extant anthropoid apes can stand erect and move about on their two feet alone, but only in case of urgent need and in a very clumsy way. Their natural gait is in a half-erect posture and includes the use of the hands. The majority rest the knuckles of the fist on the ground and, with legs drawn up, swing the body through their long arms, much as a cripple moves with the aid of crutches. In general, we can today still observe among apes all the transition stages from walking on all fours to walking on two legs. But for none of them has the latter method become more than a makeshift.

For erect gait among our hairy ancestors to have become first the rule and in time a necessity presupposes that in the meantime diverse other functions increasingly devolved upon the hands. Even among the apes there already prevails a certain division in the employment of the hands and feet. As already mentioned, in climbing the hands are used differently from the feet. The former serve primarily for the collection and grasping of food, as already occurs in the use of the fore paws among lower mammals. Many monkeys use their hands to build nests for themselves in the trees or even, like the chimpanzee, to construct roofs between the branches for protection against the weather. With their hands they seize hold of clubs to defend themselves against enemies, or bombard the latter with fruits and stones. In captivity, they carry out with their hands a number of simple operations copied from human beings. But it is just here that one sees how great is the distance between the undeveloped hand of even the most anthropoid of apes and the human hand that has been highly perfected by the labour of hundreds of thousands of years. The number and general arrangement of the bones and muscles are the same in both; but the hand of the lowest savage can perform hundreds of operations that no monkey's hand can imitate. No simian hand has ever fashioned even the crudest of stone knives.

At first, therefore, the operations for which our ancestors gradually learned to adapt their hands during the many thousands of years of transition from ape to man could have been only very simple. The lowest savages, even those in whom a regression to a more animal-like condition with a simultaneous physical degeneration can be assumed to have occurred, are nevertheless far superior to these transitional beings. Before the first flint was fashioned into a knife by human hands, a period of time may have elapsed in comparison with which the historical period known to us appears insignificant. But the decisive step was taken: *the hand had become free* and could henceforth attain ever greater dexterity and skill, and the greater flexibility thus acquired was inherited and increased from generation to generation.

Thus the hand is not only the organ of labour, *it is also the product of labour*. Only by labour, by adaptation to ever new operations, by inheritance of the thus acquired special development of muscles, ligaments and, over longer periods of time, bones as well, and by the ever-renewed employment of this inherited finesse in new, more and more complicated operations, has the human hand attained the high degree of perfection that has enabled it to conjure into being the paintings of a Raphael, the statues of a Thorwaldsen, the music of a Paganini.

But the hand did not exist by itself. It was only one member of an entire, highly complex organism. And what benefitted the hand, benefitted also the whole body it served; and this in two ways.

In the first place, in consequence of the law of correlation of growth, as Darwin called it. According to this law, particular forms of separate parts of an organic being are always bound up with certain forms of other parts that apparently have no connection with the first. Thus all animals that have red blood cells without cell nuclei, and in which the back of the head is attached to the first vertebra by means of a double articulation (condyles), also without exception possess lacteal glands for suckling their young. Similarly, cloven hoofs in mammals are regularly associated with the possession of a multiple stomach for rumination. Changes in certain forms involve changes in the form of other parts of the body, although we cannot explain this connection. Perfectly white cats with blue eyes are always, or almost always, deaf. The gradually increasing perfection of the human hand, and the commensurate adaptation of the feet for erect gait, has undoubtedly, by virtue of such correlation, reacted on other parts of the organism. However, this action has as yet been much too little investigated for us to be able to do more here than to state the fact in general terms.

Much more important is the direct, demonstrable reaction of the development of the hand on the rest of the organism. As already said, our simian ancestors were gregarious; it is obviously impossible to seek the derivation of man, the most social of all animals, from non-gregarious immediate ancestors. The mastery over nature, which began with the development of the hand, with labour, widened man's horizon at every new advance. He was continually discovering new, hitherto unknown, properties of natural objects. On the other hand, the development of labour necessarily helped to bring the members of society closer together by multiplying cases of mutual support, joint activity, and by making clear the advantage of this joint activity to each individual. In short, men in the making arrived at the point where *they had something to say* to one another. The urge created its organ; the undeveloped larynx of the ape was slowly but surely transformed, by means of modulation in order to produce constantly more developed modulation, and the organs of the mouth gradually learned to pronounce one articulate letter after another.

Comparison with animals proves that this explanation of the origin of language from and with labour is the only correct one. The little that these, even the most highly-developed of them, have to communicate to one another can be communicated without

the aid of articulate speech. In a state of nature, no animal feels handicapped by its inability to speak or to understand human speech. It is quite different when it has been tamed by man. The dog and the horse, by association with man, have developed such a good ear for articulate speech that they easily learn to understand any language within the range of their circle of ideas. Moreover, they have acquired the capacity for feelings such as affection for man, gratitude, etc., which were previously foreign to them. Anyone who has had much to do with such animals will hardly be able to escape the conviction that there are plenty of cases where they *now* feel their inability to speak is a defect, although, unfortunately, it can no longer be remedied owing to their vocal organs being too specialized in a definite direction. However, where the organ exists, within certain limits even this inability disappears. The buccal organs of birds are, of course, as different from those of man as can be, yet birds are the only animals that can learn to speak; and it is the bird with the most hideous voice, the parrot, that speaks best of all. Let no one object that the parrot does not understand what it says. It is true that for the sheer pleasure of talking and associating with human beings, the parrot will chatter for hours at a stretch, continually repeating its whole vocabulary. But within the limits of its circle of ideas it can also learn to understand what it is saying. Teach a parrot swear words in such a way that it gets an idea of their meaning (one of the great amusements of sailors returning from the tropics); tease it and you will soon discover that it knows how to use its swear words just as correctly as a Berlin costermonger. Similarly with begging for titbits.

First labour, after it and then with it speech—these were the two most essential stimuli under the influence of which the brain of the ape gradually changed into that of man, which for all its similarity is far larger and more perfect. Hand in hand with the development of the brain went the development of its most immediate instruments—the sense organs. Just as the gradual development of speech is necessarily accompanied by a corresponding refinement of the organ of hearing, so the development of the brain as a whole is accompanied by a refinement of all the senses. The eagle sees much farther than man, but the human eye sees considerably more in things than does the eye of the eagle. The dog has a far keener sense of smell than man, but it does not distinguish a hundredth part of the odours that for man are definite signs denoting different things. And the sense of touch, which the ape hardly possesses in its crudest initial form, has been developed only side by side with the development of the human hand itself, through the medium of labour.

The reaction on labour and speech of the development of the brain and its attendant senses, of the increasing clarity of consciousness, power of abstraction and of judgment, gave both labour and speech an ever-renewed impulse to further development, a development which, far from reaching its conclusion when man finally became distinct from the monkey, continued on the whole to make powerful progress, varying since in degree and direction among different peoples and at different times, and here and there even interrupted by local or temporary regression. This further development has been strongly urged forward, on the one hand, and guided along more definite directions, on the other hand, by a new element which came into play with the appearance of fully-fledged man, namely, *society*.

Hundreds of thousands of years—of no greater significance in the history of the earth than one second in the life of man<sup>1</sup>—certainly elapsed before human society arose out of a troupe of tree-climbing monkeys. Yet it did finally appear. And what do we find once more as the characteristic difference between the troupe of monkeys and human society? *Labour*. The ape band was satisfied to browse over the feeding area determined for it by geographical conditions or the resistance of neighbouring bands; it undertook migrations and struggles to win new feeding grounds, but it was incapable of extracting from them more than they offered in their natural state, except that the band unconsciously fertilized the soil with its own excrements. As soon as all possible feeding grounds were occupied, further increase of the monkey population could not occur; the number of animals could at best remain stationary. But all animals waste a great deal of food, and, in addition, destroy in germ the next generation of the food supply. Unlike the hunter, the wolf does not spare the doe which would provide it with kids the next year; the goats in Greece, which graze down the young bushes before they grow up, have eaten bare all the mountains of the country. This "predatory economy" of animals plays an important part in the gradual transformation of species by forcing them to adapt themselves to other than the usual food, thanks to which their blood acquires a different chemical composition and the whole physical constitution gradually alters, while species that were once established die out. There is no doubt that this predatory economy has powerfully contributed to the transition of our ancestors from ape to man. In a race of apes that far surpassed all others in intelli-

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<sup>1</sup> A leading authority in this respect, Sir William Thomson, has calculated that *little more than a hundred million years* could have elapsed since the time when the earth had cooled sufficiently for plants and animals to be able to live on it. [*Note by Engels.*]

gence and adaptability, this predatory economy could not help leading to a continual increase in the number of plants used for food and to the devouring of more and more edible parts of alimentary plants. In short, it led to the food becoming more and more varied, hence also the substances entering the body, the chemical premises for the transition to man. But all that was not yet labour in the proper sense of the word. Labour begins with the making of tools. And what are the most ancient tools that we find—the most ancient judging by the heirlooms of prehistoric man that have been discovered, and by the mode of life of the earliest historical peoples and of the rawest of contemporary savages? They are hunting and fishing implements, the former at the same time serving as weapons. But hunting and fishing presuppose the transition from an exclusively vegetable diet to the concomitant use of meat, and this is another important step in the process of transition from ape to man. A *meat diet* contained in an almost ready state the most essential ingredients required by the organism for its metabolism. It shortened the time required, not only for digestion, but also for the other vegetative bodily processes corresponding to those of plant life, and thus gained further time, material and desire for the active manifestation of animal life in the proper sense of the word. And the farther man in the making moved from the plant the higher he rose above the animal. Just as becoming accustomed to a plant diet side by side with meat converted wild cats and dogs into the servants of man, so also adaptation to a meat diet, side by side with a vegetable diet, considerably contributed to giving bodily strength and independence to man in the making. The most essential effect, however, of a meat diet was on the brain, which now received a far richer flow of the materials necessary for its nourishment and development than formerly, and which, therefore, could develop more rapidly and perfectly from generation to generation. With all respect to the vegetarians it has to be recognized that man did not come into existence without a meat diet, and if the latter, among all peoples known to us, has led to cannibalism at some time or other (the forefathers of the Berliners, the Weletabians or Wilzians, used to eat their parents as late as the tenth century), that is of no consequence to us today.

The meat diet led to two new advances of decisive importance: to the harnessing of fire and the domestication of animals. The first still further shortened the digestive process, as it provided the mouth with food already, as it were, semi-digested; the second made meat more copious by opening up a new, more regular source of supply in addition to hunting, and moreover provided, in milk and its products, a new article of food at least as valuable as meat



in its composition. Thus both these advances became directly new means of emancipation for man. It would lead us too far afield to dwell here in detail on their indirect effects notwithstanding the great importance they have had for the development of man and society.

Just as man learned to consume everything edible, he also learned to live in any climate. He spread over the whole of the habitable world, being the only animal completely possessing the capacity to do so by itself. The other animals that have become accustomed to all climates—domestic animals and vermin—did not become so of themselves, but only in the wake of man. And the transition from the uniformly hot climate of the original home of man to colder regions, where the year was divided into summer and winter, created new requirements: shelter and clothing as protection against cold and damp, new spheres of labour and hence new activities, which further and further separated man from the animal.

By the cooperation of hands, organs of speech and brain, not only in each individual but also in society, human beings became capable of executing more and more complicated operations, and of setting themselves, and achieving, higher and higher aims. With each generation labour itself became different, more perfect, more diversified. Agriculture was added to hunting and cattle raising; then spinning, weaving, metalworking, pottery and navigation. Along with trade and industry there appeared finally art and science. From tribes there developed nations and states. Law and politics arose, and with them the fantastic mirror image of human things in the human mind: religion. In the face of all these creations, which appeared in the first place as products of the mind and which seemed to dominate human societies, the more modest productions of the working hand retreated into the background, the more so since the mind that planned the labour already at a very early stage of development of society (for example, already in the primitive family), was able to have the labour that had been planned carried out by other hands than its own. All merit for the swift advance of civilization was ascribed to the mind, to the development and activity of the brain. Men became accustomed to explain their actions from their thoughts instead of from their needs (which in any case are reflected, come to consciousness in the mind);—and so there arose in the course of time that idealistic outlook on the world which, especially since the end of the ancient world, has dominated men's minds. It still rules them to such a degree that even the most materialistic natural scientists of the Darwinian school are still unable to form any clear idea of the origin of man, because under this ideological influence they do not recognize the part that has been played therein by labour.

Animals, as already indicated, change external nature by their activities just as man does, even if not to the same extent, and these changes made by them in their environment, as we have seen, in turn react upon and change their originators. For in nature nothing takes place in isolation. Every thing affects every other thing and *vice versa*, and it is mostly because this all-sided motion and interaction is forgotten that our natural scientists are prevented from clearly seeing the simplest things. We have seen how goats have prevented the regeneration of forests in Greece; on St. Helena, goats and pigs disembarked by the first arrivals have succeeded in exterminating its old vegetation almost completely, and so have prepared the ground for the spreading of plants brought by later sailors and colonists. But if animals exert a lasting effect on their environment it happens unintentionally and, as far as the animals themselves are concerned, it is an accident. The further removed men are from animals, however, the more their effect on nature assumes the character of premeditated, planned action directed towards definite ends known in advance. The animal destroys the vegetation of a locality without realizing what it is doing. Man destroys it in order to sow field crops on the soil thus released, or to plant trees or vines which he knows will yield many times the amount sown. He transfers useful plants and domestic animals from one country to another and thus changes the flora and fauna of whole continents. More than this. Through artificial breeding both plants and animals are so changed by the hand of man that they become unrecognizable. The wild plants from which our grain varieties originate are still being sought in vain. The question of the wild animal from which our dogs are descended, the dogs themselves being so different from one another, or our equally numerous breeds of horses, is still under dispute.

In any case, of course, we have no intention of disputing the ability of animals to act in a planned, premeditated fashion. On the contrary, a planned mode of action exists in embryo wherever protoplasm, living albumen, exists and reacts, that is, carries out definite, even if extremely simple, movements as a result of definite external stimuli. Such reaction takes place even where there is as yet no cell at all, let alone a nerve cell. The manner in which insectivorous plants capture their prey appears likewise in a certain respect as a planned action, although performed quite unconsciously. In animals the capacity for conscious, planned action develops proportionally to the development of the nervous system, and among mammals it attains quite a high level. While fox hunting in England one can daily observe how unerringly the fox knows how to make use of its excellent knowledge of the locality in order to elude its

pursuers, and how well it knows and turns to account all favourable features of the ground that cause the scent to be lost. Among our domestic animals, more highly developed thanks to association with man, every day one can observe acts of cunning on exactly the same level as those of children. For, just as the developmental history of the human embryo in the mother's womb is only an abbreviated repetition of the history, extending over millions of years, of the bodily evolution of our animal ancestors, starting from the worm, so the mental development of the human child is only a still more abbreviated repetition of the intellectual development of these same ancestors, at least of the later ones. But all the planned action of all animals has never contrived to impress the stamp of their will upon the earth. It took man to do that.

In short, the animal merely *uses* external nature, and brings about changes in it simply by its presence; man by his changes makes nature serve his ends, *masters* it. This is the final, essential distinction between man and the other animals, and once again it is labour that brings about this distinction.

Let us not, however, flatter ourselves overmuch on account of our human victories over nature. For each such victory it takes its revenge on us. Each of them, it is true, has in the first place the consequences on which we counted, but in the second and third places it has quite different, unforeseen effects which only too often cancel the first. The people who, in Mesopotamia, Greece, Asia Minor and elsewhere, utterly destroyed the forests to obtain cultivable land never dreamed that they were laying the basis for the present devastated condition of these countries, by removing along with the forests the collecting centres and reservoirs of moisture. When the Italians of the Alps used up the pine forests on the southern slopes, so carefully cherished on the northern slopes, they had no inkling that by doing so they were cutting at the roots of the dairy industry in their region; they had still less inkling that they were thereby depriving their mountain springs of water for the greater part of the year, and making it possible for them to pour still more furious torrents of it on the plains during the rainy seasons. Those who spread the potato in Europe were not aware that with these farinaceous tubers they were at the same time spreading scrofula. Thus at every step we are reminded that we by no means rule over nature like a conqueror over a foreign people, like someone standing outside nature—but that we, with flesh, blood and brain, belong to nature, and exist in its midst, and that all our mastery of it consists in the fact that we have the advantage over all other creatures of being able to know and correctly apply its laws.

And, in fact, with every day that passes we are learning to under-

stand its laws more correctly, and getting to perceive both the more immediate and the more remote consequences of our interference with the traditional course of nature. In particular, after the mighty advances of natural science in the present century, we are more and more placed in a position where we can learn and hence control even the more remote natural consequences of at least our most ordinary productive activities. But the more this happens the more will men not only feel but also realize their oneness with nature, and the more impossible will become the senseless and unnatural idea of a contrast between mind and matter, man and nature, soul and body, such as arose in Europe after the decline of classical antiquity and obtained its highest elaboration in Christianity.

But if it has already required the labour of thousands of years for us to learn, to some extent, to calculate the more remote *natural* effects of our actions directed toward production, it has been still more difficult in regard to the more remote *social* effects of these actions. We mentioned the potato and the resulting spread of scrofula. But what is scrofula in comparison with the effect which the reduction of the workers to a potato diet had on the living conditions of the masses of the people in whole countries or in comparison with the famine which overtook Ireland in 1847 in consequence of the potato blight, and which consigned to the grave a million Irishmen, nourished, and that almost exclusively, on potatoes, and forced the emigration overseas of two million more? When the Arabs learned to distil alcohol, it never entered their heads that by so doing they were creating one of the chief weapons for the annihilation of the aborigenes of the then still undiscovered American continent. And when afterwards Columbus discovered this America, he did not know that by doing so he was giving a new lease of life to slavery, which in Europe had long ago been done away with, and laying the basis for the trade in Negroes. The men who in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries laboured to create the steam engine had no idea that they were preparing the instrument which more than any other was to revolutionize social conditions throughout the world. Especially in Europe, by concentrating wealth in the hands of a minority, the huge majority being rendered propertyless, this instrument was destined at first to give social and political domination to the bourgeoisie, and then, however, to give rise to a class struggle between bourgeoisie and proletariat which can end only in the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the abolition of all class antagonisms. But in this sphere too, by long and often cruel experience and by collecting and analyzing the historical material, we are gradually learning to get a clear view of the indirect, more

remote social effects of our productive activity, and so the possibility is afforded us of controlling and regulating these effects as well.

However, to effectuate this regulation requires something more than mere knowledge. It requires a complete revolution in our hitherto existing mode of production, and with it of our whole contemporary social order.

All hitherto existing modes of production have aimed merely at achieving the most immediately and directly useful effect of labour. The further consequences, which appear only later on and become effective through gradual repetition and accumulation, were totally neglected. The original common ownership of land corresponded, on the one hand, to a level of development of human beings in which their horizon was restricted in general to what lay immediately at hand, and presupposed, on the other hand, a certain superfluity of available land, allowing a certain latitude for correcting any possible bad results of this primeval type of economy. When this surplus land was exhausted, common ownership declined. All higher forms of production, however, led to the division of the population into different classes and thereby to the antagonism of ruling and oppressed classes. Thus the interest of the ruling class became the driving factor of production, in so far as the latter was not restricted to the barest means of subsistence of the oppressed people. This has been carried through most completely in the capitalist mode of production prevailing today in Western Europe. The individual capitalists, who dominate production and exchange, are able to concern themselves only with the most immediate useful effect of their actions. Indeed, even this useful effect—inasmuch as it is a question of the usefulness of the article that is produced or exchanged—retreats right into the background, and the sole incentive becomes the profit to be made on selling.

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The social science of the bourgeoisie, classical political economy, is predominantly occupied only with the directly intended social effects of human actions connected with production and exchange. This fully corresponds to the social organization of which it is the theoretical expression. As individual capitalists are engaged in production and exchange for the sake of the immediate profit, only the nearest, most immediate results can be taken into account in the first place. As long as the individual manufacturer or merchant sells a manufactured or purchased commodity with the usual coveted profit, he is satisfied and does not concern himself with what

afterwards becomes of the commodity and its purchasers. The same thing applies to the natural effects of the same actions. What cared the Spanish planters in Cuba, who burned down forests on the slopes of the mountains and obtained from the ashes sufficient fertilizer for *one* generation of highly profitable coffee trees—what cared they that the heavy tropical rainfall afterwards washed away the now unprotected upper stratum of the soil, leaving behind only bare rock! In relation to nature, as to society, the present mode of production is predominantly concerned only about the first, the most tangible result; and then surprise is even expressed that the more remote effects of actions directed to this end turn out to be of quite a different, mainly even of quite an opposite, character; that the harmony of supply and demand is transformed into its diametrical opposite, as shown by the course of each ten years' industrial cycle, and of which even Germany has experienced a little preliminary in the "crash";<sup>1</sup> that private ownership based on one's own labour necessarily develops into the propertylessness of the workers, while all wealth becomes more and more concentrated in the hands of non-workers; that [...] <sup>2</sup>

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Translated from the German

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<sup>1</sup> Engels refers to the economic crisis of 1873-74.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> Here the manuscript breaks off.—*Ed.*

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*Frederick Engels*

## SOCIALISM: UTOPIAN AND SCIENTIFIC

### SPECIAL INTRODUCTION TO THE ENGLISH EDITION OF 1892

The present little book is, originally, a part of a larger whole. About 1875, Dr. E. Dühring, *privatdocent* at Berlin University, suddenly and rather clamorously announced his conversion to Socialism, and presented the German public not only with an elaborate Socialist theory, but also with a complete practical plan for the reorganization of society. As a matter of course, he fell foul of his predecessors; above all, he honoured Marx by pouring out upon him the full vials of his wrath.

This took place about the time when the two sections of the Socialist party in Germany—Eisenachers and Lassalleans—had just effected their fusion, and thus obtained not only an immense increase of strength, but, what was more, the faculty of employing the whole of this strength against the common enemy. The Socialist party in Germany was fast becoming a power. But to make it a power, the first condition was that the newly-conquered unity should not be imperilled. And Dr. Dühring openly proceeded to form around himself a sect, the nucleus of a future separate party. It thus became necessary to take up the gauntlet thrown down to us, and to fight out the struggle whether we liked it or not.

This, however, though it might not be an over-difficult, was evidently a long-winded business. As is well known, we Germans are of a terribly ponderous *Gründlichkeit*, radical profundity or profound radicality, whatever you may like to call it. Whenever anyone of us expounds what he considers a new doctrine, he has first to elaborate it into an all-comprising system. He has to prove that both the first principles of logic and the fundamental laws of the universe had existed from all eternity for no other purpose than to ultimately lead to this newly-discovered, crowning theory. And

Dr. Dühring, in this respect, was quite up to the national mark. Nothing less than a complete "System of Philosophy," mental, moral, natural, and historical; a complete "System of Political Economy and Socialism"; and, finally, a "Critical History of Political Economy"—three big volumes in octavo, heavy extrinsically and intrinsically, three army-corps of arguments mobilised against all previous philosophers and economists in general, and against Marx in particular—in fact, an attempt at a complete "revolution in science"—these were what I should have to tackle. I had to treat of all and every possible subject, from the concepts of time and space to Bimetallism; from the eternity of matter and motion to the perishable nature of moral ideas; from Darwin's natural selection to the education of youth in a future society. Anyhow, the systematic comprehensiveness of my opponent gave me the opportunity of developing, in opposition to him, and in a more connected form than had previously been done, the views held by Marx and myself on this great variety of subjects. And that was the principal reason which made me undertake this otherwise ungrateful task.

My reply was first published in a series of articles in the Leipzig "Vorwärts," the chief organ of the Socialist party,<sup>1</sup> and later on as a book: "Herrn Eugen Dührings Umwälzung der Wissenschaft" (Mr. E. Dühring's "Revolution in Science"), a second edition of which appeared in Zürich, 1886.

At the request of my friend, Paul Lafargue, now representative of Lille in the French Chamber of Deputies, I arranged three chapters of this book as a pamphlet, which he translated and published in 1880, under the title: "Socialisme utopique et Socialisme scientifique." From this French text a Polish and a Spanish edition were prepared. In 1883, our German friends brought out the pamphlet in the original language. Italian, Russian, Danish, Dutch, and Roumanian translations, based upon the German text, have since been published. Thus, with the present English edition, this little book circulates in ten languages. I am not aware that any other Socialist work, not even our "Communist Manifesto" of 1848 or Marx's "Capital," has been so often translated. In Germany it has had four editions of about 20,000 copies in all.

The Appendix, "The Mark,"<sup>2</sup> was written with the intention of spreading among the German Socialist party some elementary

<sup>1</sup> *Vorwärts*: The central organ of German Social Democracy after the Gotha Unification Congress. It appeared in Leipzig in 1876-78.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> "The Mark": Ancient Germanic village community. Under this title Engels briefly related, in an appendix to the first German and first English edition of *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*, the history of the German peasantry beginning with antiquity.—*Ed.*



knowledge of the history and development of landed property in Germany. This seemed all the more necessary at a time when the assimilation by that party of the working-people of the towns was in a fair way of completion, and when the agricultural labourers and peasants had to be taken in hand. This appendix has been included in the translation, as the original forms of tenure of land common to all Teutonic tribes, and the history of their decay, are even less known in England than in Germany. I have left the text as it stands in the original, without alluding to the hypothesis recently started by Maxim Kovalevsky, according to which the partition of the arable and meadow lands among the members of the Mark was preceded by their being cultivated for joint-account by a large patriarchal family community embracing several generations (as exemplified by the still existing South Slavonian Zadruga), and that the partition, later on, took place when the community had increased, so as to become too unwieldy for joint-account management. Kovalevsky is probably quite right, but the matter is still *sub judice*.<sup>1</sup>

The economic terms used in this work, as far as they are new, agree with those used in the English edition of Marx's *Capital*. We call "production of commodities" that economic phase where articles are produced not only for the use of the producers, but also for purposes of exchange; that is, *as commodities*, not as use values. This phase extends from the first beginnings of production for exchange down to our present time; it attains its full development under capitalist production only, that is, under conditions where the capitalist, the owner of the means of production, employs, for wages, labourers, people deprived of all means of production except their own labour-power, and pockets the excess of the selling price of the products over his outlay. We divide the history of industrial production since the Middle Ages into three periods: (1) handicraft, small master craftsmen with a few journeymen and apprentices, where each labourer produces the complete article; (2) manufacture, where greater numbers of workmen, grouped in one large establishment, produce the complete article on the principle of division of labour, each workman performing only one partial operation, so that the product is complete only after having passed successively through the hands of all; (3) modern industry, where the product is produced by machinery driven by power, and where the work of the labourer is limited to superintending and correcting the performances of the mechanical agent.

I am perfectly aware that the contents of this work will meet with objection from a considerable portion of the British public.

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<sup>1</sup> *Sub judice*: Under consideration.—Ed.

But if we Continentals had taken the slightest notice of the prejudices of British "respectability," we should be even worse off than we are. This book defends what we call "historical materialism," and the word materialism grates upon the ears of the immense majority of British readers. "Agnosticism"<sup>1</sup> might be tolerated, but materialism is utterly inadmissible.

And yet the original home of all modern materialism, from the seventeenth century onwards, is England.

"Materialism is the natural-born son of Great Britain. Already the British schoolman, Duns Scotus, asked, 'whether it was impossible for matter to think?'

"In order to effect this miracle, he took refuge in God's omnipotence, *i. e.*, he made theology preach materialism. Moreover, he was a nominalist. Nominalism,<sup>2</sup> the first form of materialism, is chiefly found among the English schoolmen.

"The real progenitor of English materialism is Bacon. To him natural philosophy is the only true philosophy, and physics based upon the experience of the senses is the chiefest part of natural philosophy. Anaxagoras and his *homoiomeria*, Democritus and his atoms, he often quotes as his authorities. According to him the senses are infallible and the source of all knowledge. All science is based on experience, and consists in subjecting the data furnished by the senses to a rational method of investigation. Induction, analysis, comparison, observation, experiment, are the principal forms of such a rational method. Among the qualities inherent in matter, motion is the first and foremost, not only in the form of mechanical and mathematical motion, but chiefly in the form of an impulse, a vital spirit, a tension—or a 'qual,' to use a term of Jakob Böhme's<sup>3</sup>—of matter.

"In Bacon, its first creator, materialism still occludes within itself the germs of a many-sided development. On the one hand, matter, surrounded by a sensuous, poetic glamour, seems to attract man's

<sup>1</sup> *Agnosticism* is derived from the Greek prefix *a*—not, and *gnosis*—knowledge. It admits the existence of material things but considers them unknowable.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> *Nominalism* is derived from the Latin *nomen*—name and is a trend of medieval philosophy whose adherents maintained that generic concepts are only names of analogous objects.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup> "Qual" is a philosophical play upon words. Qual literally means torture, a pain which drives to action of some kind; at the same time the mystic Böhme puts into the German word something of the meaning of the Latin *qualitas*; his "qual" was the activating principle arising from, and promoting in its turn, the spontaneous development of the thing, relation, or person subject to it, in contradistinction to a pain inflicted from without. [*Note by Engels to the English edition.*]

whole entity by winning smiles. On the other, the aphoristically formulated doctrine pullulates with inconsistencies imported from theology.

"In its further evolution, materialism becomes one-sided. Hobbes is the man who systematises Baconian materialism. Knowledge based upon the senses loses its poetic blossom, it passes into the abstract experience of the mathematician; geometry is proclaimed as the queen of sciences. Materialism takes to misanthropy. If it is to overcome its opponent, misanthropic, fleshless spiritualism, and that on the latter's own ground, materialism has to chastise its own flesh and turn ascetic. Thus, from a sensual, it passes into an intellectual, entity; but thus, too, it evolves all the consistency, regardless of consequences, characteristic of the intellect.

"Hobbes, as Bacon's continuator, argues thus: if all human knowledge is furnished by the senses, then our concepts and ideas are but the phantoms, divested of their sensual forms, of the real world. Philosophy can but give names to these phantoms. One name may be applied to more than one of them. There may even be names of names. It would imply a contradiction if, on the one hand, we maintained that all ideas had their origin in the world of sensation, and, on the other, that a word was more than a word; that besides the beings known to us by our senses, beings which are one and all individuals, there existed also beings of a general, not individual, nature. An unbodily substance is the same absurdity as an unbodily body. Body, being, substance, are but different terms for the same reality. *It is impossible to separate thought from matter that thinks.* This matter is the substratum of all changes going on in the world. The word infinite is meaningless, unless it states that our mind is capable of performing an endless process of addition. Only material things being perceptible to us, we cannot know anything about the existence of God. My own existence alone is certain. Every human passion is a mechanical movement which has a beginning and an end. The objects of impulse are what we call good. Man is subject to the same laws as nature. Power and freedom are identical.

"Hobbes had systematized Bacon, without, however, furnishing a proof for Bacon's fundamental principle, the origin of all human knowledge from the world of sensation. It was Locke who, in his "Essay on the Human Understanding," supplied this proof.

"Hobbes had shattered the theistic<sup>1</sup> prejudices of Baconian materialism; Collins, Dodwell, Coward, Hartley, Priestley similarly

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<sup>1</sup> *Theistic*: Pertaining to *theism*, a religious-philosophical doctrine in which the existence of a personal deity, a creator of the universe, is recognized.—*Ed.*

shattered the last theological bars that still hemmed in Locke's sensationalism. At all events, for practical materialists, Deism<sup>1</sup> is but an easy-going way of getting rid of religion."<sup>2</sup>

Thus Karl Marx wrote about the British origin of modern materialism. If Englishmen nowadays do not exactly relish the compliment he paid their ancestors, more's the pity. It is none the less undeniable that Bacon, Hobbes and Locke are the fathers of that brilliant school of French materialists which made the eighteenth century, in spite of all battles on land and sea won over Frenchmen by Germans and Englishmen, a pre-eminently French century, even before that crowning French Revolution, the results of which we outsiders, in England as well as in Germany, are still trying to acclimatise.

There is no denying it. About the middle of this century, what struck every cultivated foreigner who set up his residence in England, was what he was then bound to consider the religious bigotry and stupidity of the English respectable middle-class. We, at that time, were all materialists, or, at least, very advanced free-thinkers, and to us it appeared inconceivable that almost all educated people in England should believe in all sorts of impossible miracles, and that even geologists like Buckland and Mantell should contort the facts of their science so as not to clash too much with the myths of the book of Genesis; while, in order to find people who dared to use their own intellectual faculties with regard to religious matters, you had to go amongst the uneducated, the "great unwashed," as they were then called, the working people, especially the Owenite Socialists.

But England has been "civilised" since then. The exhibition of 1851 sounded the knell of English insular exclusiveness. England became gradually internationalised, in diet, in manners, in ideas; so much so that I begin to wish that some English manners and customs had made as much headway on the Continent as other Continental habits have made here. Anyhow, the introduction and spread of salad-oil (before 1851 known only to the aristocracy) has been accompanied by a fatal spread of Continental scepticism in matters religious, and it has come to this, that agnosticism, though not yet considered "the thing" quite as much as the Church of Eng-

<sup>1</sup> *Deism*: A religious-philosophical trend which rejects the idea of a personal deity but recognizes the idea of a godhead as the impersonal Prime Cause of the world.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> Marx and Engels, *Die Heilige Familie*, Frankfurt a. M. 1845, pp. 201-04. [Note by Engels.]

The full title of this book by Marx and Engels is: *Die Heilige Familie oder Kritik der kritischen Kritik. Gegen Bruno Bauer und Konsorten* [The Holy Family, or a Criticism of Critical Criticism. Against Bruno Bauer and Co.].—Ed.

land, is yet very nearly on a par, as far as respectability goes, with Baptism, and decidedly ranks above the Salvation Army. And I cannot help believing that under these circumstances it will be consoling to many who sincerely regret and condemn this progress of infidelity to learn that these "new-fangled notions" are not of foreign origin, are not "made in Germany," like so many other articles of daily use, but are undoubtedly Old English, and that their British originators two hundred years ago went a good deal further than their descendants now dare to venture.

What, indeed, is agnosticism but, to use an expressive Lancashire term, "shamefaced" materialism? The agnostic's conception of Nature is materialistic throughout. The entire natural world is governed by law, and absolutely excludes the intervention of action from without. But, he adds, we have no means either of ascertaining or of disproving the existence of some Supreme Being beyond the known universe. Now, this might hold good at the time when Laplace, to Napoleon's question, why in the great astronomer's *Mécanique céleste*<sup>1</sup> the Creator was not even mentioned, proudly replied: "*Je n'avais pas besoin de cette hypothèse.*"<sup>2</sup> But nowadays, in our evolutionary conception of the universe, there is absolutely no room for either a Creator or a Ruler; and to talk of a Supreme Being shut out from the whole existing world, implies a contradiction in terms, and, as it seems to me, a gratuitous insult to the feelings of religious people.

Again, our agnostic admits that all our knowledge is based upon the information imparted to us by our senses. But, he adds, how do we know that our senses give us correct representations of the objects we perceive through them? And he proceeds to inform us that, whenever he speaks of objects or their qualities, he does in reality not mean these objects and qualities, of which he cannot know anything for certain, but merely the impressions which they have produced on his senses. Now, this line of reasoning seems undoubtedly hard to beat by mere argumentation. But before there was argumentation there was action. *Im Anfang war die That.*<sup>3</sup> And human action had solved the difficulty long before human ingenuity invented it. The proof of the pudding is in the eating. From the moment we turn to our own use these objects, according to the qualities we perceive in them, we put to an infallible test the correctness or otherwise of our sense-perceptions. If these perceptions have been wrong, then our estimate of the use to which an object can be turned

<sup>1</sup> P. S. Laplace, *Traité de mécanique céleste* [*Treatise on Celestial Mechanics*], vols. I-V. Paris 1799-1825.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> "I had no need of this hypothesis."—Ed.

<sup>3</sup> In the beginning was the deed. From Goethe's *Faust*.—Ed.

must also be wrong, and our attempt must fail. But if we succeed in accomplishing our aim, if we find that the object does agree with our idea of it, and does answer the purpose we intended it for, then that is positive proof that our perceptions of it and of its qualities, *so far*, agree with reality outside ourselves. And whenever we find ourselves face to face with a failure, then we generally are not long in making out the cause that made us fail; we find that the perception upon which we acted was either incomplete and superficial, or combined with the results of other perceptions in a way not warranted by them—what we call defective reasoning. So long as we take care to train and to use our senses properly, and to keep our action within the limits prescribed by perceptions properly made and properly used, so long we shall find that the result of our action proves the conformity of our perceptions with the objective nature of the things perceived. Not in one single instance, so far, have we been led to the conclusion that our sense-perceptions, scientifically controlled, induce in our minds ideas respecting the outer world that are, by their very nature, at variance with reality, or that there is an inherent incompatibility between the outer world and our sense-perceptions of it.

But then come the Neo-Kantian agnostics and say: We may correctly perceive the qualities of a thing, but we cannot by any sensible or mental process grasp the thing-in-itself. This "thing-in-itself" is beyond our ken. To this Hegel, long since, has replied: If you know all the qualities of a thing, you know the thing itself; nothing remains but the fact that the said thing exists without us; and when your senses have taught you that fact, you have grasped the last remnant of the thing-in-itself, Kant's celebrated unknowable *Ding an sich*. To which it may be added that in Kant's time our knowledge of natural objects was indeed so fragmentary that he might well suspect, behind the little we knew about each of them, a mysterious "thing-in-itself." But one after another these ungraspable things have been grasped, analysed, and, what is more, *re-produced* by the giant progress of science; and what we can produce we certainly cannot consider as unknowable. To the chemistry of the first half of this century organic substances were such mysterious objects; now we learn to build them up one after another from their chemical elements without the aid of organic processes. Modern chemists declare that as soon as the chemical constitution of no matter what body is known, it can be built up from its elements. We are still far from knowing the constitution of the highest organic substances, the albuminous bodies; but there is no reason why we should not, if only after centuries, arrive at that knowledge and, armed with it, produce artificial albumen. But if we arrive at that, we shall

at the same time have produced organic life, for life, from its lowest to its highest forms, is but the normal mode of existence of albuminous bodies.

As soon, however, as our agnostic has made these formal mental reservations, he talks and acts as the rank materialist he at bottom is. He may say that, as far as *we* know, matter and motion, or as it is now called, energy, can neither be created nor destroyed, but that we have no proof of their not having been created at some time or other. But if you try to use this admission against him in any particular case, he will quickly put you out of court. If he admits the possibility of spiritualism *in abstracto*, he will have none of it *in concreto*. As far as we know and can know, he will tell you there is no Creator and no Ruler of the universe; as far as we are concerned, matter and energy can neither be created nor annihilated; for us, mind is a mode of energy, a function of the brain; all we know is that the material world is governed by immutable laws, and so forth. Thus, as far as he is a scientific man, as far as he *knows* anything, he is a materialist; outside his science, in spheres about which he knows nothing, he translates his ignorance into Greek and calls it agnosticism.

At all events, one thing seems clear: even if I was an agnostic, it is evident that I could not describe the conception of history sketched out in this little book as "historical agnosticism." Religious people would laugh at me, agnostics would indignantly ask, was I going to make fun of them? And thus I hope even British respectability will not be overshocked if I use, in English as well as in so many other languages, the term "historical materialism," to designate that view of the course of history which seeks the ultimate cause and the great moving power of all important historic events in the economic development of society, in the changes in the modes of production and exchange, in the consequent division of society into distinct classes, and in the struggles of these classes against one another.

This indulgence will perhaps be accorded to me all the sooner if I show that historical materialism may be of advantage even to British respectability. I have mentioned the fact that, about forty or fifty years ago, any cultivated foreigner settling in England was struck by what he was then bound to consider the religious bigotry and stupidity of the English respectable middle-class. I am now going to prove that the respectable English middle-class of that time was not quite as stupid as it looked to the intelligent foreigner. Its religious leanings can be explained.

When Europe emerged from the Middle Ages, the rising middle-class of the towns constituted its revolutionary element. It had

conquered a recognised position within mediaeval feudal organisation, but this position, also, had become too narrow for its expansive power. The development of the middle-class, the *bourgeoisie*, became incompatible with the maintenance of the feudal system; the feudal system, therefore, had to fall.

But the great international centre of feudalism was the Roman Catholic Church. It united the whole of feudalised Western Europe, in spite of all internal wars, into one grand political system, opposed as much to the schismatic Greeks as to the Mohammedan countries. It surrounded feudal institutions with the halo of divine consecration. It had organised its own hierarchy on the feudal model, and, lastly, it was itself by far the most powerful feudal lord, holding, as it did, fully one-third of the soil of the Catholic world. Before profane feudalism could be successfully attacked in each country and in detail, this, its sacred central organisation, had to be destroyed.

Moreover, parallel with the rise of the middle-class went on the great revival of science; astronomy, mechanics, physics, anatomy, physiology, were again cultivated. And the *bourgeoisie*, for the development of its industrial production, required a science which ascertained the physical properties of natural objects and the modes of action of the forces of Nature. Now up to then science had but been the humble handmaid of the Church, had not been allowed to overstep the limits set by faith, and for that reason had been no science at all. Science rebelled against the Church; the *bourgeoisie* could not do without science, and, therefore, had to join in the rebellion.

The above, though touching but two of the points where the rising middle-class was bound to come into collision with the established religion, will be sufficient to show, first, that the class most directly interested in the struggle against the pretensions of the Roman Church was the *bourgeoisie*; and second, that every struggle against feudalism, at that time, had to take on a religious disguise, had to be directed against the Church in the first instance. But if the universities and the traders of the cities started the cry, it was sure to find, and did find, a strong echo in the masses of the country people, the peasants, who everywhere had to struggle for their very existence with their feudal lords, spiritual and temporal.

The long fight of the *bourgeoisie* against feudalism culminated in three great, decisive battles.

The first was what is called the Protestant Reformation in Germany. The war cry raised against the Church by Luther was responded to by two insurrections of a political nature: first, that of the lower nobility under Franz von Sickingen (1523), then the



great Peasants' War, 1525. Both were defeated, chiefly in consequence of the indecision of the parties most interested, the burghers of the towns—an indecision into the causes of which we cannot here enter. From that moment the struggle degenerated into a fight between the local princes and the central power, and ended by blotting out Germany, for two hundred years, from the politically active nations of Europe. The Lutheran Reformation produced a new creed indeed, a religion adapted to absolute monarchy. No sooner were the peasants of North-east Germany converted to Lutheranism than they were from freemen reduced to serfs.

But where Luther failed, Calvin won the day. Calvin's creed was one fit for the boldest of the bourgeoisie of his time. His predestination doctrine was the religious expression of the fact that in the commercial world of competition success or failure does not depend upon a man's activity or cleverness, but upon circumstances uncontrollable by him. It is not of him that willeth or of him that runneth, but of the mercy of unknown superior economic powers; and this was especially true at a period of economic revolution, when all old commercial routes and centres were replaced by new ones, when India and America were opened to the world, and when even the most sacred economic articles of faith—the value of gold and silver—began to totter and to break down. Calvin's church constitution was thoroughly democratic and republican; and where the kingdom of God was republicanised, could the kingdoms of this world remain subject to monarchs, bishops and lords? While German Lutheranism became a willing tool in the hands of princes, Calvinism founded a republic in Holland, and active republican parties in England, and, above all, Scotland.

In Calvinism, the second great bourgeois upheaval found its doctrine ready cut and dried. This upheaval took place in England. The middle-class of the towns brought it on, and the yeomanry of the country districts fought it out. Curiously enough, in all the three great bourgeois risings, the peasantry furnishes the army that has to do the fighting; and the peasantry is just the class that, the victory once gained, is most surely ruined by the economic consequences of that victory. A hundred years after Cromwell, the yeomanry of England had almost disappeared. Anyhow, had it not been for that yeomanry and for the *plebeian* element in the towns, the bourgeoisie alone would never have fought the matter out to the bitter end, and would never have brought Charles I to the scaffold. In order to secure even those conquests of the bourgeoisie that were ripe for gathering at the time, the revolution had to be carried considerably further—exactly as in 1793 in France and 1848 in Germany. This seems, in fact, to be one of the laws of evolution of bourgeois society.

Well, upon this excess of revolutionary activity there necessarily followed the inevitable reaction which in its turn went beyond the point where it might have maintained itself. After a series of oscillations, the new centre of gravity was at last attained and became a new starting-point. The grand period of English history, known to respectability under the name of "the Great Rebellion," and the struggles succeeding it, were brought to a close by the comparatively puny event entitled by Liberal historians "the Glorious Revolution."

The new starting-point was a compromise between the rising middle-class and the ex-feudal landowners. The latter, though called, as now, the aristocracy, had been long since on the way which led them to become what Louis Philippe in France became at a much later period, "the first bourgeois of the kingdom." Fortunately for England, the old feudal barons had killed one another during the Wars of the Roses. Their successors, though mostly scions of the old families, had been so much out of the direct line of descent that they constituted quite a new body, with habits and tendencies far more bourgeois than feudal. They fully understood the value of money, and at once began to increase their rents by turning hundreds of small farmers out and replacing them by sheep. Henry VIII, while squandering the Church lands, created fresh bourgeois landlords by wholesale; the innumerable confiscations of estates, regranted to absolute or relative upstarts, and continued during the whole of the seventeenth century, had the same result. Consequently, ever since Henry VII, the English "aristocracy," far from counteracting the development of industrial production, had, on the contrary, sought to indirectly profit thereby; and there had always been a section of the great landowners willing, from economical or political reasons, to cooperate with the leading men of the financial and industrial bourgeoisie. The compromise of 1689 was, therefore, easily accomplished. The political spoils of "pelf and place" were left to the great landowning families, provided the economic interests of the financial, manufacturing and commercial middle-class were sufficiently attended to. And these economic interests were at that time powerful enough to determine the general policy of the nation. There might be squabbles about matters of detail, but, on the whole, the aristocratic oligarchy knew too well that its own economic prosperity was irretrievably bound up with that of the industrial and commercial middle-class.

From that time, the bourgeoisie was a humble, but still a recognised component of the ruling classes of England. With the rest of them, it had a common interest in keeping in subjection the great working mass of the nation. The merchant or manufacturer

himself stood in the position of master, or, as it was until lately called, of "natural superior" to his clerks, his workpeople, his domestic servants. His interest was to get as much and as good work out of them as he could; for this end they had to be trained to proper submission. He was himself religious; his religion had supplied the standard under which he had fought the king and the lords; he was not long in discovering the opportunities this same religion offered him for working upon the minds of his natural inferiors, and making them submissive to the behests of the masters it had pleased God to place over them. In short, the English bourgeoisie now had to take a part in keeping down the "lower orders," the great producing mass of the nation, and one of the means employed for that purpose was the influence of religion.

There was another fact that contributed to strengthen the religious leanings of the bourgeoisie. That was the rise of materialism in England. This new doctrine not only shocked the pious feelings of the middle-class; it announced itself as a philosophy only fit for scholars and cultivated men of the world, in contrast to religion, which was good enough for the uneducated masses, including the bourgeoisie. With Hobbes it stepped on the stage as a defender of royal prerogative and omnipotence; it called upon absolute monarchy to keep down that *puer robustus sed malitiosus*,<sup>1</sup> to wit, the people. Similarly, with the successors of Hobbes, with Bolingbroke, Shaftesbury, etc., the new deistic form of materialism remained an aristocratic, esoteric doctrine, and, therefore, hateful to the middle-class both for its religious heresy and for its anti-bourgeois political connections. Accordingly, in opposition to the materialism and deism of the aristocracy, those Protestant sects which had furnished the flag and the fighting contingent against the Stuarts continued to furnish the main strength of the progressive middle-class, and form even to-day the backbone of "the Great Liberal Party."

In the meantime materialism passed from England to France, where it met and coalesced with another materialistic school of philosophers, a branch of Cartesianism. In France, too, it remained at first an exclusively aristocratic doctrine. But soon its revolutionary character asserted itself. The French materialists did not limit their criticism to matters of religious belief; they extended it to whatever scientific tradition or political institution they met with; and to prove the claim of their doctrine to universal application, they took the shortest cut, and boldly applied it to all subjects of knowledge in the giant work after which they were named—the

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<sup>1</sup> Robust but malicious boy.—Ed.

*Encyclopédie*. Thus, in one or the other of its two forms—avowed materialism or deism—it became the creed of the whole cultured youth of France; so much so that, when the Great Revolution broke out, the doctrine hatched by English Royalists gave a theoretical flag to French Republicans and Terrorists, and furnished the text for the Declaration of the Rights of Man. The Great French Revolution was the third uprising of the bourgeoisie, but the first that had entirely cast off the religious cloak, and was fought out on undisguised political lines; it was the first, too, that was really fought out up to the destruction of one of the combatants, the aristocracy, and the complete triumph of the other, the bourgeoisie. In England the continuity of pre-revolutionary and post-revolutionary institutions, and the compromise between landlords and capitalists, found its expression in the continuity of judicial precedents and in the religious preservation of the feudal forms of the law. In France the Revolution constituted a complete breach with the traditions of the past; it cleared out the very last vestiges of feudalism, and created in the *Code Civil* a masterly adaptation of the old Roman law—that almost perfect expression of the juridical relations corresponding to the economic stage called by Marx the production of commodities—to modern capitalistic conditions; so masterly that this French revolutionary code still serves as a model for reforms of the law of property in all other countries, not excepting England. Let us, however, not forget that if English law continues to express the economic relations of capitalistic society in that barbarous feudal language which corresponds to the thing expressed, just as English spelling corresponds to English pronunciation—*vous écrivez Londres et vous prononcez Constantinople*, said a Frenchman—that same English law is the only one which has preserved through ages, and transmitted to America and the Colonies, the best part of that old Germanic personal freedom, local self-government and independence from all interference but that of the law courts which on the Continent has been lost during the period of absolute monarchy, and has nowhere been as yet fully recovered.

To return to our British bourgeois. The French Revolution gave him a splendid opportunity, with the help of the Continental monarchies, to destroy French maritime commerce, to annex French colonies, and to crush the last French pretensions to maritime rivalry. That was one reason why he fought it. Another was that the ways of this revolution went very much against his grain. Not only its "execrable" terrorism, but the very attempt to carry bourgeois rule to extremes. What should the British bourgeois do without his aristocracy, that taught him manners, such as they were, and invented fashions for him—that furnished officers for the army,

which kept order at home, and the navy, which conquered colonial possessions and new markets abroad? There was indeed a progressive minority of the bourgeoisie, that minority whose interests were not so well attended to under the compromise; this section, composed chiefly of the less wealthy middle-class, did sympathise with the Revolution, but it was powerless in Parliament.

Thus, if materialism became the creed of the French Revolution, the God-fearing English bourgeois held all the faster to his religion. Had not the reign of terror in Paris proved what was the upshot, if the religious instincts of the masses were lost? The more materialism spread from France to neighbouring countries, and was reinforced by similar doctrinal currents, notably by German philosophy, the more, in fact, materialism and free thought generally became, on the Continent, the necessary qualifications of a cultivated man, the more stubbornly the English middle-class stuck to its manifold religious creeds. These creeds might differ from one another, but they were, all of them, distinctly religious, Christian creeds.

While the Revolution ensured the political triumph of the bourgeoisie in France, in England Watt, Arkwright, Cartwright, and others initiated an industrial revolution, which completely shifted the centre of gravity of economic power. The wealth of the bourgeoisie increased considerably faster than that of the landed aristocracy. Within the bourgeoisie itself, the financial aristocracy, the bankers, etc., were more and more pushed into the background by the manufacturers. The compromise of 1689, even after the gradual changes it had undergone in favour of the bourgeoisie, no longer corresponded to the relative position of the parties to it. The character of these parties, too, had changed; the bourgeoisie of 1830 was very different from that of the preceding century. The political power still left to the aristocracy, and used by them to resist the pretensions of the new industrial bourgeoisie, became incompatible with the new economic interests. A fresh struggle with the aristocracy was necessary; it could end only in a victory of the new economic power. First, the Reform Act was pushed through, in spite of all resistance, under the impulse of the French Revolution of 1830. It gave to the bourgeoisie a recognised and powerful place in Parliament. Then the Repeal of the Corn Laws,<sup>1</sup> which settled, once for all, the supremacy of the bourgeoisie, and especially of its most active portion, the manufacturers, over the landed aristocracy. This was the greatest victory of the bourgeoisie; it was, however, also the last it gained

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<sup>1</sup> *Corn Laws*: The fight against the grain import restrictions in England ended in 1846 with the adoption of a law providing for the abolition of grain tariffs in three years. In 1849 the tariffs were accordingly abolished.—*Ed.*

in its own exclusive interest. Whatever triumphs it obtained later on, it had to share with a new social power, first its ally, but soon its rival.

The industrial revolution had created a class of large manufacturing capitalists, but also a class—and a far more numerous one—of manufacturing workpeople. This class gradually increased in numbers, in proportion as the industrial revolution seized upon one branch of manufacture after another, and in the same proportion it increased in power. This power it proved as early as 1824, by forcing a reluctant Parliament to repeal the acts forbidding combinations of workmen. During the Reform agitation, the working-men constituted the Radical wing of the Reform party; the Act of 1832 having excluded them from the suffrage, they formulated their demands in the People's Charter, and constituted themselves, in opposition to the great bourgeois Anti-Corn Law party, into an independent party, the Chartists, the first working-men's party of modern times.

Then came the Continental revolutions of February and March 1848, in which the working people played such a prominent part, and, at least in Paris, put forward demands which were certainly inadmissible from the point of view of capitalist society. And then came the general reaction. First the defeat of the Chartists on the 10th April, 1848, then the crushing of the Paris working-men's insurrection in June of the same year, then the disasters of 1849 in Italy, Hungary, South Germany, and at last the victory of Louis Bonaparte over Paris, 2nd December, 1851. For a time, at least, the bugbear of working-class pretensions was put down, but at what cost! If the British bourgeois had been convinced before of the necessity of maintaining the common people in a religious mood, how much more must he feel that necessity after all these experiences? Regardless of the sneers of his Continental compeers, he continued to spend thousands and tens of thousands, year after year, upon the evangelisation of the lower orders; not content with his own native religious machinery, he appealed to Brother Jonathan,<sup>1</sup> the greatest organiser in existence of religion as a trade, and imported from America revivalism, Moody and Sankey,<sup>2</sup> and the like; and, finally, he accepted the dangerous aid of the Salvation Army, which revives the propaganda of early Christianity, appeals to the poor as the elect, fights capitalism in a religious way, and thus fosters an element of early Christian class antagonism, which one

<sup>1</sup> *Brother Jonathan*: Earlier equivalent of Uncle Sam.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> *Revivalism*: A movement of the past century which attempted to revive the declining influence of religion. Moody and Sankey, two American preachers, were organisers of it.—Ed.

day may become troublesome to the well-to-do people who now find the ready money for it.

It seems a law of historical development that the bourgeoisie can in no European country get hold of political power—at least for any length of time—in the same exclusive way in which the feudal aristocracy kept hold of it during the Middle Ages. Even in France, where feudalism was completely extinguished, the bourgeoisie, as a whole, has held full possession of the Government for very short periods only. During Louis Philippe's reign, 1830-48, a very small portion of the bourgeoisie ruled the kingdom; by far the larger part were excluded from the suffrage by the high qualification. Under the second Republic, 1848-51, the whole bourgeoisie ruled, but for three years only; their incapacity brought on the second Empire. It is only now, in the third Republic, that the bourgeoisie as a whole have kept possession of the helm for more than twenty years; and they are already showing lively signs of decadence. A durable reign of the bourgeoisie has been possible only in countries like America, where feudalism was unknown, and society at the very beginning started from a bourgeois basis. And even in France and America, the successors of the bourgeoisie, the working people, are already knocking at the door.

In England, the bourgeoisie never held undivided sway. Even the victory of 1832 left the landed aristocracy in almost exclusive possession of all the leading Government offices. The meekness with which the wealthy middle-class submitted to this remained inconceivable to me until the great Liberal manufacturer, Mr. W. A. Forster, in a public speech implored the young men of Bradford to learn French, as a means to get on in the world, and quoted from his own experience how sheepish he looked when, as a Cabinet Minister, he had to move in society where French was, at least, as necessary as English! The fact was, the English middle-class of that time were, as a rule, quite uneducated upstarts, and could not help leaving to the aristocracy those superior Government places where other qualifications were required than mere insular narrowness and insular conceit, seasoned by business sharpness.<sup>1</sup> Even

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<sup>1</sup> And even in business matters, the conceit of national Chauvinism is but a sorry adviser. Up to quite recently, the average English manufacturer considered it derogatory for an Englishman to speak any language but his own, and felt rather proud than otherwise of the fact that "poor devils" of foreigners settled in England and took off his hands the trouble of disposing of his products abroad. He never noticed that these foreigners, mostly Germans, thus got command of a very large part of British foreign trade, imports and exports, and that the direct foreign trade of Englishmen became limited, almost entirely, to the colonies, China, the United States and South America. Nor did he notice that these Germans traded with other Germans abroad, who

now the endless newspaper debates about middle-class education show that the English middle-class does not yet consider itself good enough for the best education, and looks to something more modest. Thus, even after the repeal of the Corn Laws, it appeared a matter of course that the men who had carried the day, the Cobdens, Brights, Forsters, etc., should remain excluded from a share in the official government of the country, until twenty years afterwards a new Reform Act opened to them the door of the Cabinet. The English bourgeoisie are, up to the present day, so deeply penetrated by a sense of their social inferiority that they keep up, at their own expense and that of the nation, an ornamental caste of drones to represent the nation worthily at all State functions; and they consider themselves highly honoured whenever one of themselves is found worthy of admission into this select and privileged body, manufactured, after all, by themselves.

The industrial and commercial middle-class had, therefore, not yet succeeded in driving the landed aristocracy completely from political power when another competitor, the working-class, appeared on the stage. The reaction after the Chartist movement and the Continental revolutions, as well as the unparalleled extension of English trade from 1848-66 (ascribed vulgarly to Free Trade alone, but due far more to the colossal development of railways, ocean steamers and means of intercourse generally), had again driven the working-class into the dependency of the Liberal party, of which they formed, as in pre-Chartist times, the Radical wing. Their claims to the franchise, however, gradually became irresistible; while the Whig leaders of the Liberals "funked," Disraeli showed his superiority by making the Tories seize the favourable moment and introduce household suffrage in the boroughs, along with a redistribution of seats. Then followed the ballot; then in 1884 the extension of household suffrage to the counties and a fresh redistribution of seats, by which electoral districts were to some extent equalised. All these measures considerably increased the electoral power of the working-class, so much so that in at least 150 to 200 constituencies that class now furnishes the majority of voters. But parliamentary government

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gradually organised a complete network of commercial colonies all over the world. But when Germany, about forty years ago, seriously began manufacturing for export, this network served her admirably in her transformation, in so short a time, from a corn-exporting into a first-rate manufacturing country. Then, about ten years ago, the British manufacturer got frightened, and asked his ambassadors and consuls how it was that he could no longer keep his customers together. The unanimous answer was: (1) You don't learn your customer's language but expect him to speak your own; (2) You don't even try to suit your customer's wants, habits, and tastes, but expect him to conform to your English ones. [*Note by Engels.*]



is a capital school for teaching respect for tradition; if the middle-class look with awe and veneration upon what Lord John Manners playfully called "our old nobility," the mass of the working-people then looked up with respect and deference to what used to be designated as "their betters," the middle-class. Indeed, the British workman, some fifteen years ago, was the model workman, whose respectful regard for the position of his master, and whose self-restraining modesty in claiming rights for himself, consoled our German economists of the *Katheder-Socialist* school for the incurable communistic and revolutionary tendencies of their own working-men at home.

But the English middle-class—good men of business as they are—saw farther than the German professors. They had shared their power but reluctantly with the working-class. They had learnt, during the Chartist years, what that *puer robustus sed malitiosus*, the people, is capable of. And since that time, they had been compelled to incorporate the better part of the People's Charter in the Statutes of the United Kingdom. Now, if ever, the people must be kept in order by moral means, and the first and foremost of all moral means of action upon the masses is and remains—religion. Hence the parsons' majorities on the School Boards, hence the increasing self-taxation of the bourgeoisie for the support of all sorts of revivalism, from ritualism to the Salvation Army.

And now came the triumph of British respectability over the free thought and religious laxity of the Continental bourgeois. The workmen of France and Germany had become rebellious. They were thoroughly infected with Socialism, and, for very good reasons, were not at all particular as to the legality of the means by which to secure their own ascendancy. The *puer robustus*, here, turned from day to day more *malitiosus*. Nothing remained to the French and German bourgeoisie as a last resource but to silently drop their free thought, as a youngster, when sea-sickness creeps upon him, quietly drops the burning cigar he brought swaggeringly on board; one by one, the scoffers turned pious in outward behaviour, spoke with respect of the Church, its dogmas and rites, and even conformed with the latter as far as could not be helped. French bourgeois dined *maigre* on Fridays, and German ones sat out long Protestant sermons in their pews on Sundays. They had come to grief with materialism. "*Die Religion muss dem Volk erhalten werden*,"—religion must be kept alive for the people—that was the only and the last means to save society from utter ruin. Unfortunately for themselves, they did not find this out until they had done their level best to break up religion for ever. And now it was the turn

of the British bourgeois to sneer and to say: "Why, you fools, I could have told you that two hundred years ago!"

However, I am afraid neither the religious stolidity of the British, nor the *post festum* conversion of the Continental bourgeois will stem the rising Proletarian tide. Tradition is a great retarding force, is the *vis inertiae* of history, but, being merely passive, is sure to be broken down; and thus religion will be no lasting safeguard to capitalist society. If our juridical, philosophical, and religious ideas are the more or less remote offshoots of the economical relations prevailing in a given society, such ideas cannot, in the long run, withstand the effects of a complete change in these relations. And, unless we believe in supernatural revelation, we must admit that no religious tenets will ever suffice to prop up a tottering society.

In fact, in England too, the working-people have begun to move again. They are, no doubt, shackled by traditions of various kinds. Bourgeois traditions, such as the widespread belief that there can be but two parties, Conservatives and Liberals, and that the working-class must work out its salvation by and through the great Liberal Party. Working-men's traditions, inherited from their first tentative efforts at independent action, such as the exclusion, from ever so many old Trade Unions, of all applicants who have not gone through a regular apprenticeship; which means the breeding, by every such union, of its own blacklegs. But for all that the English working-class is moving, as even Professor Brentano has sorrowfully had to report to his brother Katheder-Socialists. It moves, like all things in England, with a slow and measured step, with hesitation here, with more or less unfruitful, tentative attempts there; it moves now and then with an over-cautious mistrust of the name of Socialism, while it gradually absorbs the substance; and the movement spreads and seizes one layer of the workers after another. It has now shaken out of their torpor the unskilled labourers of the East End of London, and we all know what a splendid impulse these fresh forces have given it in return. And if the pace of the movement is not up to the impatience of some people, let them not forget that it is the working-class which keeps alive the finest qualities of the English character, and that, if a step in advance is once gained in England, it is, as a rule, never lost afterwards. If the sons of the old Chartists, for reasons explained above, were not quite up to the mark, the grandsons bid fair to be worthy of their forefathers.

But the triumph of the European working-class does not depend upon England alone. It can only be secured by the cooperation of, at least, England, France, and Germany. In both the latter countries the working-class movement is well ahead of England. In Germany

it is even within measurable distance of success. The progress it has there made during the last twenty-five years is unparalleled. It advances with ever-increasing velocity. If the German middle-class have shown themselves lamentably deficient in political capacity, discipline, courage, energy, and perseverance, the German working-class have given ample proof of all these qualities. Four hundred years ago, Germany was the starting point of the first upheaval of the European middle-class; as things are now, is it outside the limits of possibility that Germany will be the scene, too, of the first great victory of the European proletariat?

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*F. Engels*

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# SOCIALISM: UTOPIAN AND SCIENTIFIC

## I

Modern Socialism is, in its essence, the direct product of the recognition, on the one hand, of the class antagonisms existing in the society of to-day between proprietors and non-proprietors, between capitalists and wage-workers; on the other hand, of the anarchy existing in production. But, in its theoretical form, modern Socialism originally appears ostensibly as a more logical extension of the principles laid down by the great French philosophers of the eighteenth century. Like every new theory, modern Socialism had, at first, to connect itself with the intellectual stock-in-trade ready to its hand, however deeply its roots lay in material economic facts.

The great men, who in France prepared men's minds for the coming revolution, were themselves extreme revolutionists. They recognised no external authority of any kind whatever. Religion, natural science, society, political institutions—everything was subjected to the most unsparing criticism: everything must justify its existence before the judgment-seat of reason or give up existence. Reason became the sole measure of everything. It was the time when, as Hegel says, the world stood upon its head;<sup>1</sup> first in the sense that the human head, and the principles arrived at by its thought, claimed to be the basis of all human action and association; but by and

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<sup>1</sup> This is the passage on the French Revolution: "Thought, the concept of law, all at once made itself felt, and against this the old scaffolding of wrong could make no stand. In this conception of law, therefore, a constitution has now been established, and henceforth everything must be based upon this. Since the sun had been in the firmament, and the planets circled round him, the sight had never been seen of man standing upon his head—i. e., on the Idea—and building reality after this image. Anaxagoras first said that the Nous, reason, rules the world; but now, for the first time, had man come to recognise that the Idea must rule the mental reality. And this was a magnificent sunrise. All thinking Beings have participated in celebrating this holy day. A sublime emotion swayed men at that time, an enthusiasm of reason pervaded the world, as if now had come the reconciliation of the Divine Principle with the world." [Hegel: "Philosophy of History," 1840, p. 535.] Is it not high time to set the anti-Socialist law in action against such teachings, subversive and to the common danger, by the late Professor Hegel? (*Note by Engels.*)

by, also, in the wider sense that the reality which was in contradiction to these principles had, in fact, to be turned upside down. Every form of society and government then existing, every old traditional notion was flung into the lumber-room as irrational; the world had hitherto allowed itself to be led solely by prejudices; everything in the past deserved only pity and contempt. Now, for the first time, appeared the light of day, the kingdom of reason; henceforth superstition, injustice, privilege, oppression, were to be superseded by eternal truth, eternal Right, equality based on Nature and the inalienable rights of man.

We know to-day that this kingdom of reason was nothing more than the idealised kingdom of the bourgeoisie; that this eternal Right found its realisation in bourgeois justice; that this equality reduced itself to bourgeois equality before the law; that bourgeois property was proclaimed as one of the essential rights of man; and that the government of reason, the Court at Social of Rousseau, came into being, and only could come into being, as a democratic bourgeois republic. The great thinkers of the eighteenth century could, no more than their predecessors, go beyond the limits imposed upon them by their epoch.

But, side by side with the antagonism of the feudal nobility and the burghers, who claimed to represent all the rest of society, was the general antagonism of exploiters and exploited, of rich idlers and poor workers. It was this very circumstance that made it possible for the representatives of the bourgeoisie to put themselves forward as representing not one special class, but the whole of suffering humanity. Still further. From its origin the bourgeoisie was saddled with its antithesis: capitalists cannot exist without wage-workers, and, in the same proportion as the mediaeval burgher of the guild developed into the modern bourgeois, the guild journeyman and the day-labourer, outside the guilds, developed into the proletarian. And although, upon the whole, the bourgeoisie, in their struggle with the nobility, could claim to represent at the same time the interests of the different working-classes of that period, yet in every great bourgeois movement there were independent outbursts of that class which was the forerunner, more or less developed, of the modern proletariat. For example, at the time of the German Reformation and the Peasants' War, the Anabaptists and Thomas Münzer; in the great English Revolution, the Levellers;<sup>1</sup> in the great French Revolution, Babeuf.

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<sup>1</sup> *Levellers*: Name applied to the urban and rural plebeian elements which advanced the most radical democratic demands during the Revolution of 1648 in England.—Ed.

There were theoretical enunciations corresponding with these revolutionary uprisings of a class not yet developed; in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Utopian pictures of ideal social conditions;<sup>1</sup> in the eighteenth, actual communistic theories (Morelly and Mably). The demand for equality was no longer limited to political rights; it was extended also to the social conditions of individuals. It was not simply class privileges that were to be abolished, but class distinctions themselves. A Communism, ascetic, denouncing all the pleasures of life, Spartan, was the first form of the new teaching. Then came the three great Utopians: Saint-Simon, to whom the middle-class movement, side by side with the proletariat, still had a certain significance; Fourier; and Owen, who in the country where capitalist production was most developed, and under the influence of the antagonisms begotten of this, worked out his proposals for the removal of class distinction systematically and in direct relation to French materialism.

One thing is common to all three. Not one of them appears as a representative of the interests of that proletariat which historical development had, in the meantime, produced. Like the French philosophers, they do not claim to emancipate a particular class to begin with, but all humanity at once. Like them, they wish to bring in the kingdom of reason and eternal justice, but this kingdom, as they see it, is as far as heaven from earth, from that of the French philosophers.

For, to our three social reformers, the bourgeois world, based upon the principles of these philosophers, is quite as irrational and unjust, and, therefore, finds its way to the dust-hole quite as readily as feudalism and all the earlier stages of society. If pure reason and justice have not, hitherto, ruled the world, this has been the case only because men have not rightly understood them. What was wanted was the individual man of genius, who has now arisen and who understands the truth. That he has now arisen, that the truth has now been clearly understood, is not an inevitable event, following of necessity in the chain of historical development, but a mere happy accident. He might just as well have been born 500 years earlier, and might then have spared humanity 500 years of error, strife, and suffering.

We saw how the French philosophers of the eighteenth century, the forerunners of the Revolution, appealed to reason as the sole judge of all that is. A rational government, rational society, were to be founded; everything that ran counter to eternal reason was to

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<sup>1</sup> Engels refers here to the works of the utopian Socialists Thomas More (sixteenth century) and Tommaso Campanella (seventeenth century).—*Ed.*

be remorselessly done away with. We saw also that this eternal reason was in reality nothing but the idealised understanding of the eighteenth century citizen, just then evolving into the bourgeois. The French Revolution had realised this rational society and government.

But the new order of things, rational enough as compared with earlier conditions, turned out to be by no means absolutely rational. The state based upon reason completely collapsed. Rousseau's *Contrat Social* had found its realisation in the Reign of Terror, from which the bourgeoisie, who had lost confidence in their own political capacity, had taken refuge first in the corruption of the Directorate, and, finally, under the wing of the Napoleonic despotism. The promised eternal peace was turned into an endless war of conquest. The society based upon reason had fared no better. The antagonism between rich and poor, instead of dissolving into general prosperity, had become intensified by the removal of the guild and other privileges, which had to some extent bridged it over, and by the removal of the charitable institutions of the Church. The "freedom of property" from feudal fetters, now veritably accomplished, turned out to be, for the small capitalists and small proprietors, the freedom to sell their small property, crushed under the overmastering competition of the large capitalists and landlords, to these great lords, and thus, as far as the small capitalists and peasant proprietors were concerned, became "freedom *from* property." The development of industry upon a capitalistic basis made poverty and misery of the working masses conditions of existence of society. Cash payment became more and more, in Carlyle's phrase, the sole nexus between man and man. The number of crimes increased from year to year. Formerly, the feudal vices had openly stalked about in broad daylight; though not eradicated, they were now at any rate thrust into the background. In their stead, the bourgeois vices, hitherto practised in secret, began to blossom all the more luxuriantly. Trade became to a greater and greater extent cheating. The "fraternity" of the revolutionary motto was realised in the chicanery and rivalries of the battle of competition. Oppression by force was replaced by corruption; the sword, as the first social lever, by gold. The right of the first night was transferred from the feudal lords to the bourgeois manufacturers. Prostitution increased to an extent never heard of. Marriage itself remained, as before, the legally recognised form, the official cloak of prostitution, and, moreover, was supplemented by rich crops of adultery.

In a word, compared with the splendid promises of the philosophers, the social and political institutions born of the "triumph of reason" were bitterly disappointing caricatures. All that was

wanting was the men to formulate this disappointment, and they came with the turn of the century. In 1802 Saint-Simon's Geneva letters appeared; in 1808 appeared Fourier's first work, although the groundwork of his theory dated from 1799; on January 1, 1800, Robert Owen undertook the direction of New Lanark.

At this time, however, the capitalist mode of production, and with it the antagonism between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, was still very incompletely developed. Modern Industry, which had just arisen in England, was still unknown in France. But Modern Industry develops, on the one hand, the conflicts which make absolutely necessary a revolution in the mode of production, and the doing away with its capitalistic character—conflicts not only between the classes begotten of it, but also between the very productive forces and the forms of exchange created by it. And, on the other hand, it develops, in these very gigantic productive forces, the means of ending these conflicts. If, therefore, about the year 1800, the conflicts arising from the new social order were only just beginning to take shape, this holds still more fully as to the means of ending them. The "have-nothing" masses of Paris, during the Reign of Terror, were able for a moment to gain the mastery, and thus to lead the bourgeois revolution to victory in spite of the bourgeoisie themselves. But, in doing so, they only proved how impossible it was for their domination to last under the conditions then obtaining. The proletariat, which then for the first time evolved itself from these "have-nothing" masses as the nucleus of a new class, as yet quite incapable of independent political action, appeared as an oppressed, suffering order, to whom, in its incapacity to help itself, help could, at best, be brought in from without or down from above.

This historical situation also dominated the founders of Socialism. To the crude conditions of capitalistic production and the crude class conditions corresponded crude theories. The solution of the social problems, which as yet lay hidden in undeveloped economic conditions, the Utopians attempted to evolve out of the human brain. Society presented nothing but wrongs; to remove these was the task of reason. It was necessary, then, to discover a new and more perfect system of social order and to impose this upon society from without by propaganda, and, wherever it was possible, by the example of model experiments. These new social systems were foredoomed as Utopian; the more completely they were worked out in detail, the more they could not avoid drifting off into pure phantasies.

These facts once established, we need not dwell a moment longer upon this side of the question, now wholly belonging to the



past. We can leave it to the literary small fry to solemnly quibble over these phantasies, which to-day only make us smile, and to crow over the superiority of their own bald reasoning, as compared with such "insanity." For ourselves, we delight in the stupendously grand thoughts and germs of thought that everywhere break out through their phantastic covering, and to which these Philistines are blind.

Saint-Simon was a son of the great French Revolution, at the outbreak of which he was not yet thirty. The Revolution was the victory of the third estate, *i. e.*, of the great masses of the nation, *working* in production and in trade, over the privileged *idle* classes, the nobles and the priests. But the victory of the third estate soon revealed itself as exclusively the victory of a small part of this "estate," as the conquest of political power by the socially privileged section of it, *i. e.*, the propertied bourgeoisie. And the bourgeoisie had certainly developed rapidly during the Revolution, partly by speculation in the lands of the nobility and of the Church, confiscated and afterwards put up for sale, and partly by frauds upon the nation by means of army contracts. It was the domination of these swindlers that, under the Directorate, brought France to the verge of ruin, and thus gave Napoleon the pretext for his *coup-d'état*.

Hence, to Saint-Simon the antagonism between the third estate and the privileged classes took the form of an antagonism between "workers" and "idlers." The idlers were not merely the old privileged classes, but also all who, without taking any part in production or distribution, lived on their incomes. And the workers were not only the wage-workers, but also the manufacturers, the merchants, the bankers. That the idlers had lost the capacity for intellectual leadership and political supremacy had been proved, and was by the Revolution finally settled. That the non-possessing classes had not this capacity seemed to Saint-Simon proved by the experiences of the Reign of Terror. Then, who was to lead and command? According to Saint-Simon, science and industry, both united by a new religious bond, destined to restore that unity of religious ideas which had been lost since the time of the Reformation—a necessarily mystic and rigidly hierarchic "new Christianity." But science, that was the scholars; and industry, that was, in the first place, the working bourgeois, manufacturers, merchants, bankers. These bourgeois were, certainly, intended by Saint-Simon to transform themselves into a kind of public officials, of social trustees; but they were still to hold, *vis-à-vis* of the workers, a commanding and economically privileged position. The bankers especially were to be called upon to direct the whole of social production by the regulation of credit. This conception was in exact keeping with

a time in which Modern Industry in France and, with it, the chasm between bourgeoisie and proletariat was only just coming into existence. But what Saint-Simon especially lays stress upon is this: what interests him first, and above all other things, is the lot of the class that is the most numerous and the most poor (*"la classe la plus nombreuse et la plus pauvre"*).

Already in his Geneva letters, Saint-Simon lays down the proposition that "all men ought to work." In the same work he recognises also that the Reign of Terror was the reign of the non-possessing masses. "See," says he to them, "what happened in France at the time when your comrades held sway there; they brought about a famine." But to recognise the French Revolution as a class war, and not simply one between nobility and bourgeoisie, but between nobility, bourgeoisie, and the non-possessors, was, in the year 1802, a most pregnant discovery. In 1816, he declares that politics is the science of production, and foretells the complete absorption of politics by economics. The knowledge that economic conditions are the basis of political institutions appears here only in embryo. Yet what is here already very plainly expressed is the idea of the future conversion of political rule over men into an administration of things and a direction of processes of production—that is to say, the "abolition of the state," about which recently there has been so much noise.

Saint-Simon shows the same superiority over his contemporaries, when in 1814, immediately after the entry of the allies into Paris, and again in 1815, during the Hundred Days' War, he proclaims the alliance of France with England, and then of both these countries with Germany, as the only guarantee for the prosperous development and peace of Europe. To preach to the French in 1815 an alliance with the victors of Waterloo required as much courage as historical foresight.

If in Saint-Simon we find a comprehensive breadth of view, by virtue of which almost all the ideas of later Socialists that are not strictly economic are found in him in embryo, we find in Fourier a criticism of the existing conditions of society, genuinely French and witty, but not upon that account any the less thorough. Fourier takes the bourgeoisie, their inspired prophets before the Revolution, and their interested eulogists after it, at their own word. He lays bare remorselessly the material and moral misery of the bourgeois world. He confronts it with the earlier philosophers' dazzling promises of a society in which reason alone should reign, of a civilisation in which happiness should be universal, of an illimitable human perfectibility, and with the rose-coloured phraseology of the bourgeois ideologists of his time. He points out how every-

where the most pitiful reality corresponds with the most high-sounding phrases, and he overwhelms this hopeless fiasco of phrases with his mordant sarcasm.

Fourier is not only a critic; his imperturbably serene nature makes him a satirist, and assuredly one of the greatest satirists of all time. He depicts, with equal power and charm, the swindling speculations that blossomed out upon the downfall of the Revolution, and the shopkeeping spirit prevalent in, and characteristic of, French commerce at that time. Still more masterly is his criticism of the bourgeois form of the relations between the sexes, and the position of woman in bourgeois society. He was the first to declare that in any given society the degree of woman's emancipation is the natural measure of the general emancipation.

But Fourier is at his greatest in his conception of the history of society. He divides its whole course, thus far, into four stages of evolution—savagery, barbarism, the patriarchate, civilisation. This last is identical with the so-called civil, or bourgeois, society of to-day—*i. e.*, with the social order that came in with the sixteenth century. He proves “that the civilised stage raises every vice practised by barbarism in a simple fashion into a form of existence, complex, ambiguous, equivocal, hypocritical”—that civilisation moves in “a vicious circle,” in contradictions which it constantly reproduces without being able to solve them; hence it constantly arrives at the very opposite to that which it wants to attain, or pretends to want to attain, so that, *e. g.*, “under civilisation poverty is born of superabundance itself.”

Fourier, as we see, uses the dialectic method in the same masterly way as his contemporary, Hegel. Using these same dialectics, he argues against the talk about illimitable human perfectibility, that every historical phase has its period of ascent and also its period of descent, and he applies this observation to the future of the whole human race. As Kant introduced into natural science the idea of the ultimate destruction of the earth, Fourier introduced into historical science that of the ultimate destruction of the human race.

Whilst in France the hurricane of the Revolution swept over the land, in England a quieter, but not on that account less tremendous, revolution was going on. Steam and the new tool-making machinery were transforming manufacture into modern industry, and thus revolutionising the whole foundation of bourgeois society. The sluggish march of development of the manufacturing period changed into a veritable storm and stress period of production. With constantly increasing swiftness the splitting-up of society into large capitalists and non-possessing proletarians went on. Between these,

instead of the former stable middle-class, an unstable mass of artisans and small shopkeepers, the most fluctuating portion of the population, now led a precarious existence.

The new mode of production was, as yet, only at the beginning of its period of ascent; as yet it was the normal, regular method of production—the only one possible under existing conditions. Nevertheless, even then it was producing crying social abuses—the herding together of a homeless population in the worst quarters of the large towns; the loosening of all traditional moral bonds, of patriarchal subordination, of family relations; overwork, especially of women and children, to a frightful extent; complete demoralisation of the working-class, suddenly flung into altogether new conditions, from the country into the town, from agriculture into modern industry, from stable conditions of existence into insecure ones that changed from day to day.

At this juncture there came forward as a reformer a manufacturer 29 years old—a man of almost sublime, childlike simplicity of character, and at the same time one of the few born leaders of men. Robert Owen had adopted the teaching of the materialistic philosophers: that man's character is the product, on the one hand, of heredity; on the other, of the environment of the individual during his lifetime, and especially during his period of development. In the industrial revolution most of his class saw only chaos and confusion, and the opportunity of fishing in these troubled waters and making large fortunes quickly. He saw in it the opportunity of putting into practice his favourite theory, and so of bringing order out of chaos. He had already tried it with success, as superintendent of more than five hundred men in a Manchester factory. From 1800 to 1829, he directed the great cotton mill at New Lanark, in Scotland, as managing partner, along the same lines, but with greater freedom of action and with a success that made him a European reputation. A population, originally consisting of the most diverse and, for the most part, very demoralised elements, a population that gradually grew to 2,500, he turned into a model colony, in which drunkenness, police, magistrates, lawsuits, poor laws, charity, were unknown. And all this simply by placing the people in conditions worthy of human beings, and especially by carefully bringing up the rising generation. He was the founder of infant schools, and introduced them first at New Lanark. At the age of two the children came to school, where they enjoyed themselves so much that they could scarcely be got home again. Whilst his competitors worked their people thirteen or fourteen hours a day, in New Lanark the working-day was only ten and a half hours. When a crisis in cotton stopped work for four months, his workers received their full wages

all the time. And with all this the business more than doubled in value, and to the last yielded large profits to its proprietors.

In spite of all this, Owen was not content. The existence which he secured for his workers was, in his eyes, still far from being worthy of human beings. "The people were slaves at my mercy." The relatively favourable conditions in which he had placed them were still far from allowing a rational development of the character and of the intellect in all directions, much less of the free exercise of all their faculties. "And yet, the working part of this population of 2,500 persons was daily producing as much real wealth for society as, less than half a century before, it would have required the working part of a population of 600,000 to create. I asked myself, what became of the difference between the wealth consumed by 2,500 persons and that which would have been consumed by 600,000?"<sup>1</sup>

The answer was clear. It had been used to pay the proprietors of the establishment 5 per cent. on the capital they had laid out, in addition to over £300,000 clear profit. And that which held for New Lanark held to a still greater extent for all the factories in England. "If this new wealth had not been created by machinery, imperfectly as it has been applied, the wars of Europe, in opposition to Napoleon, and to support the aristocratic principles of society, could not have been maintained. And yet this new power was the creation of the working-classes."<sup>2</sup> To them, therefore, the fruits of this new power belonged. The newly-created gigantic productive forces, hitherto used only to enrich individuals and to enslave the masses, offered to Owen the foundations for a reconstruction of society; they were destined, as the common property of all, to be worked for the common good of all.

Owen's Communism was based upon this purely business foundation, the outcome, so to say, of commercial calculation. Throughout, it maintained this practical character. Thus, in 1823, Owen proposed the relief of the distress in Ireland by Communist colonies, and drew up complete estimates of costs of founding them, yearly expenditure, and probable revenue. And in his definite plan for the future, the technical working out of details is managed with such practical knowledge—ground plan, front and side and bird's-eye views all included—that the Owen method of social reform once accepted, there is from the practical point of view little to be said against the actual arrangement of details.

<sup>1</sup> From "The Revolution in Mind and Practice," p. 21, a memorial addressed to all the "red Republicans, Communists and Socialists of Europe," and sent to the provisional government of France, 1848, and also "to Queen Victoria and her responsible advisers." [*Note by Engels.*]

<sup>2</sup> Note, *l. c.*, p. 22. [*Note by Engels.*]

His advance in the direction of Communism was the turning-point in Owen's life. As long as he was simply a philanthropist, he was rewarded with nothing but wealth, applause, honour, and glory. He was the most popular man in Europe. Not only men of his own class, but statesmen and princes listened to him approvingly. But when he came out with his Communist theories, that was quite another thing. Three great obstacles seemed to him especially to block the path to social reform: private property, religion, the present form of marriage. He knew what confronted him if he attacked these—outlawry, excommunication from official society, the loss of his whole social position. But nothing of this prevented him from attacking them without fear of consequences, and what he had foreseen happened. Banished from official society, with a conspiracy of silence against him in the press, ruined by his unsuccessful Communist experiments in America, in which he sacrificed all his fortune, he turned directly to the working-class and continued working in their midst for thirty years. Every social movement, every real advance in England on behalf of the workers links itself on to the name of Robert Owen. He forced through in 1819, after five years' fighting, the first law limiting the hours of labour of women and children in factories. He was president of the first Congress at which all the Trade Unions of England united in a single great trade association. He introduced as transition measures to the complete communistic organisation of society, on the one hand, cooperative societies for retail trade and production. These have since that time, at least, given practical proof that the merchant and the manufacturer are socially quite unnecessary. On the other hand, he introduced labour bazaars for the exchange of the products of labour through the medium of labour-notes, whose unit was a single hour of work; institutions necessarily doomed to failure, but completely anticipating Proudhon's bank of exchange of a much later period, and differing entirely from this in that it did not claim to be the panacea for all social ills, but only a first step towards a much more radical revolution of society.

The Utopians' mode of thought has for a long time governed the Socialist ideas of the nineteenth century, and still governs some of them. Until very recently all French and English Socialists did homage to it. The earlier German Communism, including that of Weitling, was of the same school. To all these Socialism is the expression of absolute truth, reason and justice, and has only to be discovered to conquer all the world by virtue of its own power. And as absolute truth is independent of time, space, and of the historical development of man, it is a mere accident when and where it is discovered. With all this, absolute truth, reason, and justice are dif-

ferent with the founder of each different school. And as each one's special kind of absolute truth, reason, and justice is again conditioned by his subjective understanding, his conditions of existence, the measure of his knowledge and his intellectual training, there is no other ending possible in this conflict of absolute truths than that they shall be mutually exclusive one of the other. Hence, from this nothing could come but a kind of eclectic, average Socialism, which, as a matter of fact, has up to the present time dominated the minds of most of the socialist workers in France and England. Hence, a mish-mash allowing of the most manifold shades of opinion; a mish-mash of such critical statements, economic theories, pictures of future society by the founders of different sects, as excite a minimum of opposition; a mish-mash which is the more easily brewed the more the definite sharp edges of the individual constituents are rubbed down in the stream of debate, like rounded pebbles in a brook.

To make a science of Socialism, it had first to be placed upon a real basis

## II

In the meantime, along with and after the French philosophy of the eighteenth century had arisen the new German philosophy, culminating in Hegel. Its greatest merit was the taking up again of dialectics as the highest form of reasoning. The old Greek philosophers were all born natural dialecticians, and Aristotle, the most encyclopaedic intellect of them, had already analysed the most essential forms of dialectic thought. The newer philosophy, on the other hand, although in it also dialectics had brilliant exponents (*e. g.*, Descartes and Spinoza), had, especially through English influence, become more and more rigidly fixed in the so-called metaphysical mode of reasoning, by which also the French of the eighteenth century were almost wholly dominated, at all events in their special philosophical work. Outside philosophy in the restricted sense, the French nevertheless produced masterpieces of dialectic. We need only call to mind Diderot's "*Le Neveu de Rameau*," and Rousseau's "*Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes*." We give here, in brief, the essential character of these two modes of thought.

When we consider and reflect upon Nature at large or the history of mankind or our own intellectual activity, at first we see the picture of an endless entanglement of relations and reactions, permutations and combinations, in which nothing remains what, where and as it was, but everything moves, changes, comes into being and passes

away. We see, therefore, at first the picture as a whole, with its individual parts still more or less kept in the background; we observe the movements, transitions, connections, rather than the things that move, combine and are connected. This primitive, naïve but intrinsically correct conception of the world is that of ancient Greek philosophy, and was first clearly formulated by Heraclitus: everything is and is not, for everything is fluid, is constantly changing, constantly coming into being and passing away.

But this conception, correctly as it expresses the general character of the picture of appearances as a whole, does not suffice to explain the details of which this picture is made up, and so long as we do not understand these, we have not a clear idea of the whole picture. In order to understand these details we must detach them from their natural or historical connection and examine each one separately, its nature, special causes, effects, etc. This is, primarily, the task of natural science and historical research: branches of science which the Greeks of classical times, on very good grounds, relegated to a subordinate position, because they had first of all to collect materials for these sciences to work upon. A certain amount of natural and historical material must be collected before there can be any critical analysis, comparison, and arrangement in classes, orders, and species. The foundations of the exact natural sciences were, therefore, first worked out by the Greeks of the Alexandrian period,<sup>1</sup> and later on, in the Middle Ages, by the Arabs. Real natural science dates from the second half of the fifteenth century, and thence onward it had advanced with constantly increasing rapidity. The analysis of Nature into its individual parts, the grouping of the different natural processes and objects in definite classes, the study of the internal anatomy of organised bodies in their manifold forms—these were the fundamental conditions of the gigantic strides in our knowledge of Nature that have been made during the last four hundred years. But this method of work has also left us as legacy the habit of observing natural objects and processes in isolation, apart from their connection with the vast whole; of observing them in repose, not in motion; as constants, not as essentially variables; in their death, not in their life. And when this way of looking at things was transferred by Bacon and Locke from natural

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<sup>1</sup> The *Alexandrian period* of the development of science comprises the period extending from the third century B. C. to the seventh century A. D. It derives its name from the town of Alexandria in Egypt, which was one of the most important centres of international economic intercourse at that time. In the Alexandrian period, mathematics (Euclid and Archimedes), geography, astronomy, anatomy, physiology, etc., attained considerable development.—*Ed.*



science to philosophy, it begot the narrow, metaphysical mode of thought peculiar to the last century.

To the metaphysician, things and their mental reflexes, ideas, are isolated, are to be considered one after the other and apart from each other, are objects of investigation fixed, rigid, given once for all. He thinks in absolutely irreconcilable antitheses. "His communication is 'yea, yea; nay, nay'; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." For him a thing either exists or does not exist; a thing cannot at the same time be itself and something else. Positive and negative absolutely exclude one another; cause and effect stand in a rigid antithesis one to the other.

At first sight this mode of thinking seems to us very luminous, because it is that of so-called sound commonsense. Only sound commonsense, respectable fellow that he is, in the homely realm of his own four walls, has very wonderful adventures directly he ventures out into the wide world of research. And the metaphysical mode of thought, justifiable and necessary as it is in a number of domains whose extent varies according to the nature of the particular object of investigation, sooner or later reaches a limit, beyond which it becomes one-sided, restricted, abstract, lost in insoluble contradictions. In the contemplation of individual things, it forgets the connection between them; in the contemplation of their existence, it forgets the beginning and end of that existence; of their repose, it forgets their motion. It cannot see the wood for the trees.

For everyday purposes we know and can say, *e. g.*, whether an animal is alive or not. But, upon closer inquiry, we find that this is, in many cases, a very complex question, as the jurists know very well. They have cudgelled their brains in vain to discover a rational limit beyond which the killing of the child in its mother's womb is murder. It is just as impossible to determine absolutely the moment of death, for physiology proves that death is not an instantaneous, momentary phenomenon, but a very protracted process.

In like manner, every organised being is every moment the same and not the same; every moment it assimilates matter supplied from without, and gets rid of other matter; every moment some cells of its body die and others build themselves anew; in a longer or shorter time the matter of its body is completely renewed, and is replaced by other molecules of matter, so that every organised being is always itself, and yet something other than itself.

Further, we find upon closer investigation that the two poles of an antithesis, positive and negative, *e. g.*, are as inseparable as they are opposed, and that despite all their opposition, they mutually interpenetrate. And we find, in like manner, that cause

and effect are conceptions which only hold good in their application to individual cases; but as soon as we consider the individual cases in their general connection with the universe as a whole, they run into each other, and they become confounded when we contemplate that universal action and reaction in which causes and effects are eternally changing places, so that what is effect here and now will be cause there and then, and *vice versa*.

None of these processes and modes of thought enters into the framework of metaphysical reasoning. Dialectics, on the other hand, comprehends things and their representations, ideas, in their essential connection, concatenation, motion, origin, and ending. Such processes as those mentioned above are, therefore, so many corroborations of its own method of procedure.

Nature is the proof of dialectics, and it must be said for modern science that it has furnished this proof with very rich materials increasing daily, and thus has shown that, in the last resort, Nature works dialectically and not metaphysically; that she does not move in the eternal oneness of a perpetually recurring circle, but goes through a real historical evolution. In this connection Darwin must be named before all others. He dealt the metaphysical conception of Nature the heaviest blow by his proof that all organic beings, plants, animals, and man himself, are the products of a process of evolution going on through millions of years. But the naturalists who have learned to think dialectically are few and far between, and this conflict of the results of discovery with preconceived modes of thinking explains the endless confusion now reigning in theoretical natural science, the despair of teachers as well as learners, of authors and readers alike.

An exact representation of the universe, of its evolution, of the development of mankind, and of the reflection of this evolution in the minds of men, can therefore only be obtained by the methods of dialectics with its constant regard to the innumerable actions and reactions of life and death, of progressive or retrogressive changes. And in this spirit the new German philosophy has worked. Kant began his career by resolving the stable solar system of Newton and its eternal duration, after the famous initial impulse had once been given, into the result of a historic process, the formation of the sun and all the planets out of a rotating nebulous mass. From this he at the same time drew the conclusion that, given this origin of the solar system, its future death followed of necessity. His theory half a century later was established mathematically by Laplace, and half a century after that the spectroscope proved the existence in space of such incandescent masses of gas in various stages of condensation.

This new German philosophy culminated in the Hegelian system. In this system—and herein is its great merit—for the first time the whole world, natural, historical, intellectual, is represented as a process, *i. e.*, as in constant motion, change, transformation, development; and the attempt is made to trace out the internal connection that makes a continuous whole of all this movement and development. From this point of view the history of mankind no longer appeared as a wild whirl of senseless deeds of violence, all equally condemnable at the judgment seat of mature philosophic reason and which are best forgotten as quickly as possible, but as the process of evolution of man himself. It was now the task of the intellect to follow the gradual march of this process through all its devious ways, and to trace out the inner law running through all its apparently accidental phenomena.

That the Hegelian system did not solve the problem it propounded is here immaterial. Its epoch-making merit was that it propounded the problem. This problem is one that no single individual will ever be able to solve. Although Hegel was—with Saint-Simon—the most encyclopaedic mind of his time, yet he was limited, first, by the necessarily limited extent of his own knowledge and, second, by the limited extent and depth of the knowledge and conceptions of his age. To these limits a third must be added. Hegel was an idealist. To him the thoughts within his brain were not the more or less abstract pictures of actual things and processes, but, conversely, things and their evolution were only the realised pictures of the “Idea,” existing somewhere from eternity before the world was. This way of thinking turned everything upside down, and completely reversed the actual connection of things in the world. Correctly and ingeniously as many individual groups of facts were grasped by Hegel, yet, for the reasons just given, there is much that is botched, artificial, laboured, in a word, wrong in point of detail. The Hegelian system, in itself, was a colossal miscarriage—but it was also the last of its kind. It was suffering, in fact, from an internal and incurable contradiction. Upon the one hand, its essential proposition was the conception that human history is a process of evolution, which, by its very nature, cannot find its intellectual final term in the discovery of any so-called absolute truth. But, on the other hand, it laid claim to being the very essence of this absolute truth. A system of natural and historical knowledge, embracing everything, and final for all time, is a contradiction to the fundamental law of dialectic reasoning. This law, indeed, by no means excludes, but, on the contrary, includes the idea that the systematic knowledge of the external universe can make giant strides from age to age.

The perception of the fundamental contradiction in German idealism led necessarily back to materialism, but, *nota bene*, not to the simply metaphysical, exclusively mechanical materialism of the eighteenth century. Old materialism looked upon all previous history as a crude heap of irrationality and violence; modern materialism sees in it the process of evolution of humanity, and aims at discovering the laws thereof. With the French of the eighteenth century, and even with Hegel, the conception obtained of Nature as a whole, moving in narrow circles, and forever immutable, with its eternal celestial bodies, as Newton, and unalterable organic species, as Linnaeus, taught. Modern materialism embraces the more recent discoveries of natural science, according to which Nature also has its history in time, the celestial bodies, like the organic species that, under favourable conditions, people them, being born and perishing. And even if Nature, as a whole, must still be said to move in recurrent cycles, these cycles assume infinitely larger dimensions. In both aspects, modern materialism is essentially dialectic, and no longer requires the assistance of that sort of philosophy which, queen-like, pretended to rule the remaining mob of sciences. As soon as each special science is bound to make clear its position in the great totality of things and of our knowledge of things, a special science dealing with this totality is superfluous or unnecessary. That which still survives of all earlier philosophy is the science of thought and its laws—formal logic and dialectics. Everything else is subsumed in the positive science of Nature and history.

Whilst, however, the revolution in the conception of Nature could only be made in proportion to the corresponding positive materials furnished by research, already much earlier certain historical facts had occurred which led to a decisive change in the conception of history. In 1831, the first working-class rising took place in Lyons; between 1838 and 1842, the first national working-class movement, that of the English Chartists, reached its height. The class struggle between proletariat and bourgeoisie came to the front in the history of the most advanced countries in Europe, in proportion to the development, upon the one hand, of modern industry, upon the other, of the newly-acquired political supremacy of the bourgeoisie. Facts more and more strenuously gave the lie to the teachings of bourgeois economy as to the identity of the interests of capital and labour, as to the universal harmony and universal prosperity that would be the consequence of unbridled competition. All these things could no longer be ignored, any more than the French and English Socialism, which was their theoretical, though very imperfect, expression. But the old idealist conception of history, which was not yet dislodged, knew nothing of class strug-

gles based upon economic interests, knew nothing of economic interests; production and all economic relations appeared in it only as incidental, subordinate elements in the "history of civilisation."

The new facts made imperative a new examination of all past history. Then it was seen that *all* past history, with the exception of its primitive stages, was the history of class struggles; that these warring classes of society are always the products of the modes of production and of exchange—in a word, of the *economic* conditions of their time; that the economic structure of society always furnishes the real basis, starting from which we can alone work out the ultimate explanation of the whole superstructure of juridical and political institutions as well as of the religious, philosophical, and other ideas of a given historical period. Hegel had freed history from metaphysics—he had made it dialectic; but his conception of history was essentially idealistic. But now idealism was driven from its last refuge, the philosophy of history; now a materialistic treatment of history was propounded, and a method found of explaining man's "knowing" by his "being," instead of, as heretofore, his "being" by his "knowing."

From that time forward Socialism was no longer an accidental discovery of this or that ingenious brain, but the necessary outcome of the struggle between two historically developed classes—the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Its task was no longer to manufacture a system of society as perfect as possible, but to examine the historico-economic succession of events from which these classes and their antagonism had of necessity sprung, and to discover in the economic conditions thus created the means of ending the conflict. But the Socialism of earlier days was as incompatible with this materialistic conception as the conception of Nature of the French materialists was with dialectics and modern natural science. The Socialism of earlier days certainly criticised the existing capitalistic mode of production and its consequences. But it could not explain them, and, therefore, could not get the mastery of them. It could only simply reject them as bad. The more strongly this earlier Socialism denounced the exploitation of the working-class, inevitable under Capitalism, the less able was it clearly to show in what this exploitation consisted and how it arose. But for this it was necessary—(1) to present the capitalistic method of production in its historical connection and its inevitableness during a particular historical period, and therefore, also, to present its inevitable downfall; and (2) to lay bare its essential character, which was still a secret. This was done by the discovery of *surplus-value*. It was shown that the appropriation of unpaid labour is the basis of the capitalist mode of production and of the exploitation of the worker

that occurs under it; that even if the capitalist buys the labour power of his labourer at its full value as a commodity on the market, he yet extracts more value from it than he paid for; and that in the ultimate analysis this surplus-value forms those sums of value from which are heaped up the constantly increasing masses of capital in the hands of the possessing classes. The genesis of capitalist production and the production of capital were both explained.

These two great discoveries, the materialistic conception of history and the revelation of the secret of capitalistic production through surplus-value, we owe to Marx. With these discoveries Socialism became a science. The next thing was to work out all its details and relations.

### III

The materialist conception of history starts from the proposition that the production of the means to support human life and, next to production, the exchange of things produced, is the basis of all social structure; that in every society that has appeared in history, the manner in which wealth is distributed and society divided into classes or orders is dependent upon what is produced, how it is produced, and how the products are exchanged. From this point of view the final causes of all social changes and political revolutions are to be sought, not in men's brains, not in man's better insight into eternal truth and justice, but in changes in the modes of production and exchange. They are to be sought, not in the *philosophy*, but in the *economics* of each particular epoch. The growing perception that existing social institutions are unreasonable and unjust, that reason has become unreason, and right wrong,<sup>1</sup> is only proof that in the modes of production and exchange changes have silently taken place with which the social order, adapted to earlier economic conditions, is no longer in keeping. From this it also follows that the means of getting rid of the incongruities that have been brought to light must also be present, in a more or less developed condition, within the changed modes of production themselves. These means are not to be invented by deduction from fundamental principles, but are to be discovered in the stubborn facts of the existing system of production.

What is, then, the position of modern Socialism in this connection?

The present structure of society—this is now pretty generally conceded—is the creation of the ruling class of to-day, of the bour-

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<sup>1</sup> Mephistopheles in Goethe's *Faust*.—Ed.

geoisie. The mode of production peculiar to the bourgeoisie, known, since Marx, as the capitalist mode of production, was incompatible with the feudal system, with the privileges it conferred upon individuals, entire social ranks and local corporations, as well as with the hereditary ties of subordination which constituted the framework of its social organisation. The bourgeoisie broke up the feudal system and built upon its ruins the capitalist order of society, the kingdom of free competition, of personal liberty, of the equality, before the law, of all commodity owners, of all the rest of the capitalist blessings. Thenceforward the capitalist mode of production could develop in freedom. Since steam, machinery, and the making of machines by machinery transformed the older manufacture into modern industry, the productive forces evolved under the guidance of the bourgeoisie developed with a rapidity and in a degree unheard of before. But just as the older manufacture, in its time, and handicraft, becoming more developed under its influence, had come into collision with the feudal trammels of the guilds, so now modern industry, in its more complete development, comes into collision with the bounds within which the capitalistic mode of production holds it confined. The new productive forces have already outgrown the capitalistic mode of using them. And this conflict between productive forces and modes of production is not a conflict engendered in the mind of man, like that between original sin and divine justice. It exists, in fact, objectively, outside us, independently of the will and actions even of the men that have brought it on. Modern Socialism is nothing but the reflex, in thought, of this conflict in fact; its ideal reflection in the minds, first, of the class directly suffering under it, the working class.

Now, in what does this conflict consist?

Before capitalistic production, *i. e.*, in the Middle Ages, the system of petty industry obtained generally, based upon the private property of the labourers in their means of production; in the country, the agriculture of the small peasant, freeman or serf; in the towns, the handicrafts organised in guilds. The instruments of labour—land, agricultural implements, the workshop, the tool—were the instruments of labour of single individuals, adapted for the use of one worker, and, therefore, of necessity, small, dwarfish, circumscribed. But, for this very reason they belonged, as a rule, to the producer himself. To concentrate these scattered, limited means of production, to enlarge them, to turn them into the powerful levers of production of the present day—this was precisely the historic rôle of capitalist production and of its upholder, the bourgeoisie. In the fourth section of *Capital* Marx has explained in detail, how since the fifteenth century this has been historically worked out

through the three phases of simple cooperation, manufacture and modern industry. But the bourgeoisie, as is also shown there, could not transform these puny means of production into mighty productive forces without transforming them, at the same time, from means of production of the individual into *social* means of production only workable by a collectivity of men. The spinning wheel, the handloom, the blacksmith's hammer, were replaced by the spinning-machine, the power-loom, the steam-hammer; the individual workshop, by the factory implying the cooperation of hundreds and thousands of workmen. In like manner, production itself changed from a series of individual into a series of social acts, and the products from individual to social products. The yarn, the cloth, the metal articles that now came out of the factory were the joint product of many workers, through whose hands they had successively to pass before they were ready. No one person could say of them: "I made that; this is *my* product."

But where, in a given society, the fundamental form of production is that spontaneous division of labour which creeps in gradually and not upon any preconceived plan, there the products take on the form of *commodities*, whose mutual exchange, buying and selling, enable the individual producers to satisfy their manifold wants. And this was the case in the Middle Ages. The peasant, *e. g.*, sold to the artisan agricultural products and bought from him the products of handicraft. Into this society of individual producers, of commodity producers, the new mode of production thrust itself. In the midst of the old division of labour, grown up spontaneously and upon *no definite plan*, which had governed the whole of society, now arose division of labour upon a *definite plan*, as organised in the factory; side by side with *individual* production appeared *social* production. The products of both were sold in the same market, and, therefore, at prices at least approximately equal. But organisation upon a definite plan was stronger than spontaneous division of labour. The factories working with the combined social forces of a collectivity of individuals produced their commodities far more cheaply than the individual small producers. Individual production succumbed in one department after another. Socialised production revolutionised all the old methods of production. But its revolutionary character was, at the same time, so little recognised that it was, on the contrary, introduced as a means of increasing and developing the production of commodities. When it arose, it found ready-made, and made liberal use of, certain machinery for the production and exchange of commodities: merchants' capital, handicraft, wage-labour. Socialised production thus introducing itself as a new form of the production of commodities, it was a



matter of course that under it the old forms of appropriation remained in full swing, and were applied to its products as well.

In the mediaeval stage of evolution of the production of commodities, the question as to the owner of the product of labour could not arise. The individual producer, as a rule, had, from raw material belonging to himself, and generally his own handiwork, produced it with his own tools, by the labour of his own hands or of his family. There was no need for him to appropriate the new product. It belonged wholly to him, as a matter of course. His property in the product was, therefore, based *upon his own labour*. Even where external help was used, this was, as a rule, of little importance, and very generally was compensated by something other than wages. The apprentices and journeymen of the guilds worked less for board and wages than for education, in order that they might become master craftsmen themselves.

Then came the concentration of the means of production and of the producers in large workshops and manufactories, their transformation into actual socialised means of production and socialised producers. But the socialised producers and means of production and their products were still treated, after this change, just as they had been before, *i. e.*, as the means of production and the products of individuals. Hitherto, the owner of the instruments of labour had himself appropriated the product, because, as a rule, it was his own product and the assistance of others was the exception. Now the owner of the instruments of labour always appropriated to himself the product, although it was no longer *his* product but exclusively the product of the *labour of others*. Thus, the products now produced socially were not appropriated by those who had actually set in motion the means of production and actually produced the commodities, but by the *capitalists*. The means of production, and production itself, had become in essence socialised. But they were subjected to a form of appropriation which presupposes the private production of individuals, under which, therefore, every one owns his own product and brings it to market. The mode of production is subjected to this form of appropriation, although it abolishes the conditions upon which the latter rests.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> It is hardly necessary in this connection to point out that, even if the form of appropriation remains the same, the *character* of the appropriation is just as much revolutionised as production is by the changes described above. It is, of course, a very different matter whether I appropriate to myself my own product or that of another. Note in passing that wage-labour, which contains the whole capitalistic mode of production in embryo, is very ancient; in a sporadic, scattered form it existed for centuries alongside of slave-labour. But the embryo could duly develop into the capitalistic mode of production only when the necessary historical pre-conditions had been furnished. [Note by Engels.]

This contradiction, which gives to the new mode of production its capitalistic character, *contains the germ of the whole of the social antagonisms of to-day*. The greater the mastery obtained by the new mode of production over all important fields of production and in all manufacturing countries, the more it reduced individual production to an insignificant residuum, *the more clearly was brought out the incompatibility of socialised production with capitalistic appropriation*.

The first capitalists found, as we have said, alongside of other forms of labour, wage-labour ready-made for them on the market. But it was exceptional, complementary, accessory, transitory wage-labour. The agricultural labourer, though, upon occasion, he hired himself out by the day, had a few acres of his own land on which he could at all events live at a pinch. The guilds were so organised that the journeyman of to-day became the master of to-morrow. But all this changed, as soon as the means of production became socialised and concentrated in the hands of capitalists. The means of production, as well as the product, of the individual producer became more and more worthless; there was nothing left for him but to turn wage-worker under the capitalist. Wage-labour, aforesaid the exception and accessory, now became the rule and basis of all production; aforesaid complementary, it now became the sole remaining function of the worker. The wage-worker for a time became a wage-worker for life. The number of these permanent wage-workers was further enormously increased by the breaking-up of the feudal system that occurred at the same time, by the disbanding of the retainers of the feudal lords, the eviction of the peasants from their homesteads, etc. The separation was made complete between the means of production concentrated in the hands of the capitalists, on the one side, and the producers, possessing nothing but their labour-power, on the other. *The contradiction between socialised production and capitalistic appropriation manifested itself as the antagonism of proletariat and bourgeoisie*.

We have seen that the capitalistic mode of production thrust its way into a society of commodity-producers, of individual producers, whose social bond was the exchange of their products. But every society based upon the production of commodities has this peculiarity: that the producers have lost control over their own social inter-relations. Each man produces for himself with such means of production as he may happen to have, and for such exchange as he may require to satisfy his remaining wants. No one knows how much of his particular article is coming on the market, nor how much of it will be wanted. No one knows whether his individual product will meet an actual demand, whether he will be able to make good

his cost of production or even to sell his commodity at all. Anarchy reigns in socialised production.

But the production of commodities, like every other form of production, has its peculiar, inherent laws inseparable from it; and these laws work, despite anarchy, in and through anarchy. They reveal themselves in the only persistent form of social inter-relations, *i. e.*, in exchange, and here they affect the individual producers as compulsory laws of competition. They are, at first, unknown to these producers themselves, and have to be discovered by them gradually and as the result of experience. They work themselves out, therefore, independently of the producers, and in antagonism to them, as inexorable natural laws of their particular form of production. The product governs the producers.

In mediaeval society, especially in the earlier centuries, production was essentially directed towards satisfying the wants of the individual. It satisfied, in the main, only the wants of the producer and his family. Where relations of personal dependence existed, as in the country, it also helped to satisfy the wants of the feudal lord. In all this there was, therefore, no exchange; the products, consequently, did not assume the character of commodities. The family of the peasant produced almost everything they wanted: clothes and furniture, as well as means of subsistence. Only when it began to produce more than was sufficient to supply its own wants and the payments in kind to the feudal lord, only then did it also produce commodities. This surplus, thrown into socialised exchange and offered for sale, became commodities.

The artisans of the towns, it is true, had from the first to produce for exchange. But they, also, themselves supplied the greatest part of their own individual wants. They had gardens and plots of land. They turned their cattle out into the communal forest, which, also, yielded them timber and firing. The women spun flax, wool, and so forth. Production for the purpose of exchange, production of commodities, was only in its infancy. Hence, exchange was restricted, the market narrow, the methods of production stable; there was local exclusiveness without, local unity within; the mark <sup>1</sup> in the country; in the town, the guild.

But with the extension of the production of commodities, and especially with the introduction of the capitalist mode of production, the laws of commodity-production, hitherto latent, came into action more openly and with greater force. The old bonds were loosened, the old exclusive limits broken through, the producers

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix. [*Note by Engels.*]

Here Engels refers to his work *The Mark*. See p. 87 of this volume, note 2.—*Ed.*

were more and more turned into independent, isolated producers of commodities. It became apparent that the production of society at large was ruled by absence of plan, by accident, by anarchy; and this anarchy grew to greater and greater height. But the chief means by aid of which the capitalist mode of production intensified this anarchy of socialised production was the exact opposite of anarchy. It was the increasing organisation of production, upon a social basis, in every individual productive establishment. By this, the old, peaceful, stable condition of things was ended. Wherever this organisation of production was introduced into a branch of industry, it brooked no other method of production by its side. The field of labour became a battle-ground. The great geographical discoveries, and the colonisation following upon them, multiplied markets and quickened the transformation of handicraft into manufacture. The war did not simply break out between the individual producers of particular localities. The local struggles begat in their turn national conflicts, the commercial wars of the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries.

Finally, modern industry and the opening of the world-market made the struggle universal, and at the same time gave it an unheard-of virulence. Advantages in natural or artificial conditions of production now decide the existence or non-existence of individual capitalists, as well as of whole industries and countries. He that falls is remorselessly cast aside. It is the Darwinian struggle of the individual for existence transferred from Nature to society with intensified violence. The conditions of existence natural to the animal appear as the final term of human development. The contradiction between socialised production and capitalistic appropriation now presents itself as *an antagonism between the organisation of production in the individual workshop and the anarchy of production in society generally*.

The capitalistic mode of production moves in these two forms of the antagonism immanent to it from its very origin. It is never able to get out of that "vicious circle" which Fourier had already discovered. What Fourier could not, indeed, see in his time is that this circle is gradually narrowing; that the movement becomes more and more a spiral, and must come to an end, like the movement of the planets, by collision with the centre. It is the compelling force of anarchy in the production of society at large that more and more completely turns the great majority of men into proletarians; and it is the masses of the proletariat again who will finally put an end to anarchy in production. It is the compelling force of anarchy in social production that turns the limitless perfectibility of machinery under modern industry into a compulsory law by which every indi-

vidual industrial capitalist must perfect his machinery more and more, under penalty of ruin.

But the perfecting of machinery is making human labour superfluous. If the introduction and increase of machinery means the displacement of millions of manual by a few machine-workers, improvement in machinery means the displacement of more and more of the machine-workers themselves. It means, in the last instance, the production of a number of available wage-workers in excess of the average needs of capital, the formation of a complete industrial reserve army, as I called it in 1845,<sup>1</sup> available at the times when industry is working at high pressure, to be cast out upon the street when the inevitable crash comes, a constant dead weight upon the limbs of the working-class in its struggle for existence with capital, a regulator for the keeping of wages down to the low level that suits the interests of capital. Thus it comes about, to quote Marx, that machinery becomes the most powerful weapon in the war of capital against the working-class; that the instruments of labour constantly tear the means of subsistence out of the hands of the labourer; that the very product of the worker is turned into an instrument for his subjugation. Thus it comes about that the economising of the instruments of labour becomes at the same time, from the outset, the most reckless waste of labour-power, and robbery based upon the normal conditions under which labour functions; that machinery, "the most powerful instrument for shortening labour time, becomes the most unfailing means for placing every moment of the labourer's time and that of his family at the disposal of the capitalist for the purpose of expanding the value of his capital." ("Capital," English edition, p. 406.) Thus it comes about that the overwork of some becomes the preliminary condition for the idleness of others, and that modern industry, which hunts after new consumers over the whole world, forces the consumption of the masses at home down to a starvation minimum, and in doing thus destroys its own home market. "The law that always equilibrates the relative surplus-population, or industrial reserve army, to the extent and energy of accumulation, this law rivets the labourer to capital more firmly than the wedges of Vulcan did Prometheus to the rock. It establishes an accumulation of misery, corresponding with accumulation of capital. Accumulation of wealth at one pole is, therefore, at the same time accumulation of misery, agony of toil, slavery, ignorance, brutality, mental degradation, at the opposite pole, *i. e.*, on the side of the class that produces *its own product in the form of capital.*" (Marx's "Capital" [Sonnenschein & Co.], p. 661.)

<sup>1</sup> "The Condition of the Working-Class in England" (Sonnenschein & Co.), p. 84. [Note by Engels.]

And to expect any other division of the products from the capitalist mode of production is the same as expecting the electrodes of a battery not to decompose acidulated water, not to liberate oxygen at the positive, hydrogen at the negative pole, so long as they are connected with the battery.

We have seen that the ever-increasing perfectibility of modern machinery is, by the anarchy of social production, turned into a compulsory law that forces the individual industrial capitalist always to improve his machinery, always to increase its productive force. The bare possibility of extending the field of production is transformed for him into a similar compulsory law. The enormous expansive force of modern industry, compared with which that of gases is mere child's play, appears to us now as a *necessity* for expansion, both qualitative and quantitative, that laughs at all resistance. Such resistance is offered by consumption, by sales, by the markets for the products of modern industry. But the capacity for extension, extensive and intensive, of the markets is primarily governed by quite different laws that work much less energetically. The extension of the markets cannot keep pace with the extension of production. The collision becomes inevitable, and as this cannot produce any real solution so long as it does not break in pieces the capitalist mode of production, the collisions become periodic. Capitalist production has begotten another "vicious circle."

As a matter of fact, since 1825, when the first general crisis broke out, the whole industrial and commercial world, production and exchange among all civilised peoples and their more or less barbaric hangers-on, are thrown out of joint about once every ten years. Commerce is at a standstill, the markets are glutted, products accumulate, as multitudinous as they are unsaleable, hard cash disappears, credit vanishes, factories are closed, the mass of the workers are in want of the means of subsistence, because they have produced too much of the means of subsistence; bankruptcy follows upon bankruptcy, execution upon execution. The stagnation lasts for years; productive forces and products are wasted and destroyed wholesale, until the accumulated mass of commodities finally filter off, more or less depreciated in value, until production and exchange gradually begin to move again. Little by little the pace quickens. It becomes a trot. The industrial trot breaks into a canter, the canter in turn grows into the headlong gallop of a perfect steeplechase of industry, commercial credit, and speculation, which finally, after breakneck leaps, ends where it began—in the ditch of a crisis. And so over and over again. We have now, since the year 1825, gone through this five times, and at the present moment (1877) we are going through it for the sixth time. And the character of these crises is so clearly

defined that Fourier hit all of them off when he described the first as "*crise pléthorique*," a crisis from plethora.

In these crises, the contradiction between socialised production and capitalist appropriation ends in a violent explosion. The circulation of commodities is, for the time being, stopped. Money, the means of circulation, becomes a hindrance to circulation. All the laws of production and circulation of commodities are turned upside down. The economic collision has reached its apogee. *The mode of production is in rebellion against the mode of exchange.*

The fact that the socialised organisation of production within the factory has developed so far that it has become incompatible with the anarchy of production in society, which exists side by side with and dominates it, is brought home to the capitalists themselves by the violent concentration of capital that occurs during crises, through the ruin of many large, and a still greater number of small, capitalists. The whole mechanism of the capitalist mode of production breaks down under the pressure of the productive forces, its own creations. It is no longer able to turn all this mass of means of production into capital. They lie fallow, and for that very reason the industrial reserve army must also lie fallow. Means of production, means of subsistence, available labourers, all the elements of production and of general wealth, are present in abundance. But "abundance becomes the source of distress and want" (Fourier), because it is the very thing that prevents the transformation of the means of production and subsistence into capital. For in capitalistic society the means of production can only function when they have undergone a preliminary transformation into capital, into the means of exploiting human labour-power. The necessity of this transformation into capital of the means of production and subsistence stands like a ghost between these and the workers. It alone prevents the coming together of the material and personal levers of production; it alone forbids the means of production to function, the workers to work and live. On the one hand, therefore, the capitalistic mode of production stands convicted of its own incapacity to further direct these productive forces. On the other, these productive forces themselves, with increasing energy, press forward to the removal of the existing contradiction, to the abolition of their quality as capital, to the *practical recognition of their character as social productive forces.*

This rebellion of the productive forces, as they grow more and more powerful, against their quality as capital, this stronger and stronger command that their social character shall be recognised, forces the capitalist class itself to treat them more and more as social productive forces, so far as this is possible under capitalist

conditions. The period of industrial high pressure, with its unbounded inflation of credit, not less than the crash itself, by the collapse of great capitalist establishments, tends to bring about that form of the socialisation of great masses of means of production which we meet with in the different kinds of joint-stock companies. Many of these means of production and of distribution are, from the outset, so colossal that, like the railways, they exclude all other forms of capitalistic exploitation. At a further stage of evolution this form also becomes insufficient. The producers on a large scale in a particular branch of industry in a particular country unite in a "Trust," a union for the purpose of regulating production. They determine the total amount to be produced, parcel it out among themselves, and thus enforce the selling price fixed beforehand. But trusts of this kind, as soon as business becomes bad, are generally liable to break up, and on this very account compel a yet greater concentration of association. The whole of the particular industry is turned into one gigantic joint-stock company; internal competition gives place to the internal monopoly of this one company. This has happened in 1890 with the English *alkali* production, which is now, after the fusion of 48 large works, in the hands of one company, conducted upon a single plan, and with a capital of £6,000,000.

In the trusts, freedom of competition changes into its very opposite—into monopoly; and the production without any definite plan of capitalistic society capitulates to the production upon a definite plan of the invading socialistic society. Certainly this is so far still to the benefit and advantage of the capitalists. But in this case the exploitation is so palpable that it must break down. No nation will put up with production conducted by trusts, with so barefaced an exploitation of the community by a small band of dividend-mongers.

In any case, with trusts or without, the official representative of capitalist society—the state—will ultimately have to undertake the direction of production.<sup>1</sup> This necessity for conversion into

<sup>1</sup> I say "have to." For only when the means of production and distribution have *actually* outgrown the form of management by joint-stock companies, and when, therefore, the taking them over by the State has become *economically* inevitable, only then—even if it is the State of to-day that effects this—is there an economic advance, the attainment of another step preliminary to the taking over of all productive forces by society itself. But of late, since Bismarck went in for State-ownership of industrial establishments, a kind of spurious Socialism has arisen, degenerating, now and again, into something of flunkeyism, that without more ado declares *all* State-ownership, even of the Bismarckian sort, to be socialistic. Certainly, if the taking over by the State of the tobacco industry is socialistic, then Napoleon and Metternich must be numbered among the founders of Socialism. If the Belgian State, for quite ordinary political and financial reasons, itself constructed its chief railway lines; if Bismarck, not under any economic compulsion, took



State property is felt first in the great institutions for intercourse and communication—the post office, the telegraphs, the railways.

If the crises demonstrate the incapacity of the bourgeoisie for managing any longer modern productive forces, the transformation of the great establishments for production and distribution into joint-stock companies, trusts and State property show how unnecessary the bourgeoisie are for that purpose. All the social functions of the capitalist are now performed by salaried employees. The capitalist has no further social function than that of pocketing dividends, tearing off coupons, and gambling on the Stock Exchange, where the different capitalists despoil one another of their capital. At first the capitalistic mode of production forces out the workers. Now it forces out the capitalists, and reduces them, just as it reduced the workers, to the ranks of the surplus population, although not immediately into those of the industrial reserve army.

But the transformation, either into joint-stock companies and trusts, or into State-ownership, does not do away with the capitalistic nature of the productive forces. In the joint-stock companies and trusts this is obvious. And the modern State, again, is only the organisation that bourgeois society takes on in order to support the external conditions of the capitalist mode of production against the encroachments as well of the workers as of individual capitalists. The modern state, no matter what its form, is essentially a capitalist machine, the state of the capitalists, the ideal personification of the total national capital. The more it proceeds to the taking over of productive forces, the more does it actually become the national capitalist, the more citizens does it exploit. The workers remain wage-workers—proletarians. The capitalist relation is not done away with. It is rather brought to a head. But, brought to a head, it topples over. State-ownership of the productive forces is not the solution of the conflict, but concealed within it are the technical conditions that form the elements of that solution.

This solution can only consist in the practical recognition of the social nature of the modern forces of production, and therefore in the harmonising of the modes of production, appropriation, and exchange with the socialised character of the means of production.

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over for the State the chief Prussian lines, simply to be the better able to have them in hand in case of war, to bring up the railway employees as voting cattle for the Government, and especially to create for himself a new source of income independent of parliamentary votes—this was, in no sense, a socialistic measure, directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously. Otherwise, the Royal Maritime Company, the Royal porcelain manufacture, and even the regimental tailor of the army would also be socialistic institutions, or even, as was seriously proposed by a sly dog in Frederick William III's reign, the taking over by the State of the brothels. [*Note by Engels.*]

And this can only come about by society openly and directly taking possession of the productive forces which have outgrown all control except that of society as a whole. The social character of the means of production and of the products to-day reacts against the producers, periodically disrupts all production and exchange, acts only like a law of Nature working blindly, forcibly, destructively. But with the taking over by society of the productive forces, the social character of the means of production and of the products will be utilised by the producers with a perfect understanding of its nature, and instead of being a source of disturbance and periodical collapse, will become the most powerful lever of production itself.

Active social forces work exactly like natural forces: blindly, forcibly, destructively, so long as we do not understand, and reckon with, them. But when once we understand them, when once we grasp their action, their direction, their effects, it depends only upon ourselves to subject them more and more to our own will, and by means of them to reach our own ends. And this holds quite especially of the mighty productive forces of to-day. As long as we obstinately refuse to understand the nature and the character of these social means of action—and this understanding goes against the grain of the capitalist mode of production and its defenders—so long these forces are at work in spite of us, in opposition to us, so long they master us, as we have shown above in detail.

But when once their nature is understood, they can, in the hands of the producers working together, be transformed from master demons into willing servants. The difference is as that between the destructive force of electricity in the lightning of the storm, and electricity under command in the telegraph and the voltaic arc; the difference between a conflagration, and fire working in the service of man. With this recognition, at last, of the real nature of the productive forces of to-day, the social anarchy of production gives place to a social regulation of production upon a definite plan, according to the needs of the community and of each individual. Then the capitalist mode of appropriation, in which the product enslaves first the producer and then the appropriator, is replaced by the mode of appropriation of the products that is based upon the nature of the modern means of production; upon the one hand, direct social appropriation, as means to the maintenance and extension of production—on the other, direct individual appropriation, as means of subsistence and of enjoyment.

Whilst the capitalist mode of production more and more completely transforms the great majority of the population into proletarians, it creates the power which, under penalty of its own destruction, is forced to accomplish this revolution. Whilst it forces on more

and more the transformation of the vast means of production, already socialised, into State property, it shows itself the way to accomplishing this revolution. *The proletariat seizes political power and turns the means of production into State property.*

But, in doing this, it abolishes itself as proletariat, abolishes all class distinctions and class antagonisms, abolishes also the State as State. Society thus far, based upon class antagonisms, had need of the State. That is, of an organisation of the particular class which was *pro tempore* the exploiting class, an organisation for the purpose of preventing any interference from without with the existing conditions of production, and, therefore, especially, for the purpose of forcibly keeping the exploited classes in the condition of oppression corresponding with the given mode of production (slavery, serfdom, wage-labour). The State was the official representative of society as a whole; the gathering of it together into a visible embodiment. But it was this only in so far as it was the State of that class which itself represented, for the time being, society as a whole: in ancient times, the State of slaveowning citizens; in the Middle Ages, the feudal lords; in our own time, the bourgeoisie. When at last it becomes the real representative of the whole of society, it renders itself unnecessary. As soon as there is no longer any social class to be held in subjection; as soon as class rule, and the individual struggle for existence based upon our present anarchy in production, with the collisions and excesses arising from these, are removed, nothing more remains to be repressed, and a special repressive force, a State, is no longer necessary. The first act by virtue of which the State really constitutes itself the representative of the whole of society—the taking possession of the means of production in the name of society—this is, at the same time, its last independent act as a State. State interference in social relations becomes, in one domain after another, superfluous, and then dies out of itself; the government of persons is replaced by the administration of things, and by the conduct of processes of production. The State is not “abolished.” *It dies out.* This gives the measure of the value of the phrase “a free State,” both as to its justifiable use at times by agitators, and as to its ultimate scientific insufficiency; and also of the demands of the so-called anarchists for the abolition of the State out of hand.

Since the historical appearance of the capitalist mode of production, the appropriation by society of all the means of production has often been dreamed of, more or less vaguely, by individuals, as well as by sects, as the ideal of the future. But it could become possible, could become a historical necessity, only when the actual conditions for its realisation were there. Like every other social advance, it becomes practicable, not by men understanding that the

existence of classes is in contradiction to justice, equality, etc., not by the mere willingness to abolish these classes, but by virtue of certain new economic conditions. The separation of society into an exploiting and an exploited class, a ruling and an oppressed class, was the necessary consequence of the deficient and restricted development of production in former times. So long as the total social labour only yields a produce which but slightly exceeds that barely necessary for the existence of all; so long, therefore, as labour engages all or almost all the time of the great majority of the members of society—so long, of necessity, this society is divided into classes. Side by side with the great majority, exclusively bond slaves to labour, arises a class freed from directly productive labour, which looks after the general affairs of society: the direction of labour, State business, law, science, art, etc. It is, therefore, the law of division of labour that lies at the basis of the division into classes. But this does not prevent this division into classes from being carried out by means of violence and robbery, trickery and fraud. It does not prevent the ruling class, once having the upper hand, from consolidating its power at the expense of the working-class, from turning its social leadership into an intensified exploitation of the masses.

But if, upon this showing, division into classes has a certain historical justification, it has this only for a given period, only under given social conditions. It was based upon the insufficiency of production. It will be swept away by the complete development of modern productive forces. And, in fact, the abolition of classes in society presupposes a degree of historical evolution at which the existence, not simply of this or that particular ruling class, but of any ruling class at all, and, therefore, the existence of class distinction itself has become an obsolete anachronism. It presupposes, therefore, the development of production carried out to a degree at which appropriation of the means of production and of the products, and, with this, of political domination, of the monopoly of culture, and of intellectual leadership by a particular class of society, has become not only superfluous but economically, politically, intellectually a hindrance to development.

This point is now reached. Their political and intellectual bankruptcy is scarcely any longer a secret to the bourgeoisie themselves. Their economic bankruptcy recurs regularly every ten years. In every crisis, society is suffocated beneath the weight of its own productive forces and products, which it cannot use, and stands helpless, face to face with the absurd contradiction that the producers have nothing to consume, because consumers are wanting. The expansive force of the means of production bursts the bonds that

the capitalist mode of production had imposed upon them. Their deliverance from these bonds is the one precondition for an unbroken, constantly-accelerated development of the productive forces, and therewith for a practically unlimited increase of production itself. Nor is this all. The socialised appropriation of the means of production does away, not only with the present artificial restrictions upon production, but also with the positive waste and devastation of productive forces and products that are at the present time the inevitable concomitants of production, and that reach their height in the crises. Further, it sets free for the community at large a mass of means of production and of products, by doing away with the senseless extravagance of the ruling classes of to-day and their political representatives. The possibility of securing for every member of society, by means of socialised production, an existence not only fully sufficient materially, and becoming day by day more full, but an existence guaranteeing to all the free development and exercise of their physical and mental faculties—this possibility is now for the first time here, but *it is here*.<sup>1</sup>

With the seizing of the means of production by society, production of commodities is done away with, and, simultaneously, the mastery of the product over the producer. Anarchy in social production is replaced by systematic, definite organisation. The struggle for individual existence disappears. Then for the first time man, in a certain sense, is finally marked off from the rest of the animal kingdom, and emerges from mere animal conditions of existence into really human ones. The whole sphere of the conditions of life which environ man, and which have hitherto ruled man, now comes under the dominion and control of man, who for the first time becomes the real, conscious lord of Nature, because he has now become master of his own social organisation. The laws of his own social action, hitherto standing face to face with man as laws of Nature foreign to, and dominating him, will then be used with full understanding, and so mastered by him. Man's own social organisation, hitherto confronting him as a necessity imposed by Nature and history, now

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<sup>1</sup> A few figures may serve to give an approximate idea of the enormous expansive force of the modern means of production, even under capitalist pressure. According to Mr. Giffen, the total wealth of Great Britain and Ireland amounted, in round numbers, in

1814 to £2, 200,000,000,

1865 to £6, 100,000,000,

1875 to £8, 500,000,000.

As an instance of the squandering of means of production and of products during a crisis, the total loss in the German iron industry alone, in the crisis 1873-78, was given at the second German Industrial Congress (Berlin, February 21, 1878) as £22,750,000. [*Note by Engels.*]

becomes the result of his own free action. The extraneous objective forces that have hitherto governed history pass under the control of man himself. Only from that time will man himself, more and more consciously, make his own history—only from that time will the social causes set in movement by him have, in the main and in a constantly growing measure, the results intended by him. It is the ascent of man from the kingdom of necessity to the kingdom of freedom.

Let us briefly sum up our sketch of historical evolution.

I. *Mediaeval Society*—Individual production on a small scale. Means of production adapted for individual use; hence primitive, ungainly, petty, dwarfed in action. Production for immediate consumption, either of the producer himself or of his feudal lord. Only where an excess of production over this consumption occurs is such excess offered for sale, enters into exchange. Production of commodities, therefore, only in its infancy. But already it contains within itself, in embryo, *anarchy in the production of society at large*.

II. *Capitalist Revolution*—Transformation of industry, at first by means of simple cooperation and manufacture. Concentration of the means of production, hitherto scattered, into great workshops. As a consequence, their transformation from individual to social means of production—a transformation which does not, on the whole, affect the form of exchange. The old forms of appropriation remain in force. The capitalist appears. In his capacity as owner of the means of production, he also appropriates the products and turns them into commodities. Production has become a *social act*. Exchange and appropriation continue to be *individual acts*, the acts of individuals. *The social product is appropriated by the individual capitalist*. Fundamental contradiction, whence arise all the contradictions in which our present-day society moves, and which modern industry brings to light.

A. Severance of the producer from the means of production. Condemnation of the worker to wage-labour for life. *Antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie*.

B. Growing predominance and increasing effectiveness of the laws governing the production of commodities. Unbridled competition. *Contradiction between socialised organisation in the individual factory and social anarchy in production as a whole*.

C. On the one hand, perfecting of machinery, made by competition compulsory for each individual manufacturer, and complemented by a constantly growing displacement of labourers. *Industrial reserve-army*. On the other hand, unlimited extension of production, also compulsory under competition, for every manufacturer. On both sides, unheard-of development of productive forces, excess

of supply over demand, over-production, glutting of the markets, crises every ten years, the vicious circle: excess here, of means of production and products—excess there, of labourers, without employment and without means of existence. But these two levers of production and of social well-being are unable to work together, because the capitalist form of production prevents the productive forces from working and the products from circulating, unless they are first turned into capital—which their very superabundance prevents. The contradiction has grown into an absurdity. *The mode of production rises in rebellion against the form of exchange.* The bourgeoisie are convicted of incapacity further to manage their own social productive forces.

D. Partial recognition of the social character of the productive forces forced upon the capitalists themselves. Taking over of the great institutions for production and communication, first by joint-stock companies, later on by trusts, then by the State. The bourgeoisie demonstrated to be a superfluous class. All its social functions are now performed by salaried employees.

III. *Proletarian Revolution*—Solution of the contradictions. The proletariat seizes the public power, and by means of this transforms the socialised means of production, slipping from the hands of the bourgeoisie, into public property. By this act, the proletariat frees the means of production from the character of capital they have thus far borne, and gives their socialised character complete freedom to work itself out. Socialised production upon a predetermined plan becomes henceforth possible. The development of production makes the existence of different classes of society thenceforth an anachronism. In proportion as anarchy in social production vanishes, the political authority of the State dies out. Man, at last the master of his own form of social organisation, becomes at the same time the lord over Nature, his own master—free.

To accomplish this act of universal emancipation is the historical mission of the modern proletariat. To thoroughly comprehend the historical conditions and thus the very nature of this act, to impart to the now oppressed proletarian class a full knowledge of the conditions and of the meaning of the momentous act it is called upon to accomplish, this is the task of the theoretical expression of the proletarian movement, scientific Socialism.

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## Frederick Engels

### KARL MARX

Karl Marx, the man who was the first to give Socialism, thereby the whole labour movement of our day, a scientific foundation, was born at Treves in 1818. He studied in Bonn and Berlin at first taking up law, but he soon devoted himself exclusively to the study of history and philosophy, and in 1842 was on the point of establishing himself as a lecturer in philosophy when the political movement which had arisen since the death of Frederick William III directed his life into a different channel. With his collaboration the leaders of the Rhenish liberal bourgeoisie, the Camphausens, Hansemanns, etc., had founded, in Cologne, the *Rheinische Zeitung*<sup>1</sup> and in the autumn of 1842, Marx, whose criticism of the proceedings of the Rhenish provincial diet had excited very great attention, was put at the head of the paper. The *Rheinische Zeitung* naturally appeared under censorship, but the censorship could not cope with it.<sup>2</sup> The *Rheinische Zeitung* almost always got through the articles which mattered; the censor was first supplied with insignificant fodder for him to strike out, until he either gave way of himself or was compelled to give way by the threat that then the paper would not appear the next day. Ten newspapers with the same courage as the *Rheinische Zeitung* and whose publishers would have allowed a few hundred thalers extra to be expended on typesetting—and the censorship would have been made impossible in Germany as early as 1843. But the German newspaper owners were petty minded, timid philistines and the *Rheinische Zeitung* carried on the struggle alone. It wore out one censor after another; finally it came under a double censorship; after the first censorship the Governmental

<sup>1</sup> *Rhenish Gazette*.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> The first censor of the *Rheinische Zeitung* was Police Councillor Dolleschall, the same man who once struck out an advertisement in the *Kölnische Zeitung* [Cologne Gazette] of the translation of Dante's *Divine Comedy* by Philalethes (later King John of Saxony) with the remark: One must not make a comedy of divine affairs. [Note by Engels.]



president<sup>1</sup> had once more and finally to censor it. That also was of no avail. In the beginning of 1843, the government declared that it was impossible to keep this newspaper in check and suppressed it without more ado.

Marx, who in the meanwhile had married the sister of von Westphalen, later minister of the reaction, removed to Paris, and there, in conjunction with A. Ruge, published the *German-French Annuals*, in which he opened the series of his socialist writings with a *Criticism of the Hegelian Philosophy of Law*. Further, together with F. Engels, *The Holy Family. Against Bruno Bauer and Co.*, a satirical criticism of one of the latest forms blunderingly assumed by the German philosophical idealism of that time.

The study of political economy and of the history of the Great French Revolution still allowed Marx time enough for occasional attacks on the Prussian government; the latter revenged itself in the spring of 1845 by securing from the Guizot ministry—Herr Alexander von Humboldt is said to have acted as intermediary—his expulsion from France. Marx shifted his domicile to Brussels and published there in French in 1847: *The Poverty of Philosophy*, a criticism of Proudhon's *Philosophy of Poverty*, and in 1848 *Discourse on Free Trade*. At the same time he made use of the opportunity to found a German workers' society in Brussels and so commenced practical agitation. The latter became still more important for him when he and his political friends in 1847 entered the secret *Communist League*, which had already been in existence for a number of years. Its whole structure was now radically changed; this association, which previously was more or less conspiratorial, was transformed into a simple organization of communist propaganda, which was only secret because necessity compelled it to be so, the *first* organization of the German social-democratic party. The League existed wherever German workers' unions were to be found; in almost all of these unions in England, Belgium, France and Switzerland, and in very many of the unions in Germany, the leading members belonged to the League and the share of the League in the incipient German labour movement was very considerable. Moreover, our League was the first which emphasized the international character of the whole labour movement and realized it in practice, which had Englishmen, Belgians, Hungarians, Poles, etc., as members and which organized international labour meetings, especially in London.

The transformation of the League took place at two congresses held in 1847, the second of which resolved on the elaboration and

<sup>1</sup> *Regierungspräsident*: In Prussia, regional representative of the central executive.—Ed.

publication of the fundamental principles of the Party in a manifesto to be drawn up by Marx and Engels. Thus arose the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, which first appeared in 1848, shortly before the February Revolution, and has since been translated into almost all European languages.

The *Deutsche Brüsseler Zeitung*,<sup>1</sup> in which Marx participated and which mercilessly exposed the blessings of the police regime of the fatherland, caused the Prussian government to try to effect Marx's expulsion once more, but in vain. When, however, the February Revolution resulted in popular movements also in Brussels, and a radical change appeared to be imminent in Belgium, the Belgian government arrested Marx without ceremony and deported him. In the meanwhile, the French Provisional Government had sent him through Flocon an invitation to return to Paris, and he accepted this call.

In Paris he came out especially against the swindle, widespread among the Germans there, of wanting to form the German workers in France into armed legions in order to carry the revolution and the republic into Germany. On the one hand, Germany had to make her revolution herself, and, on the other hand, every revolutionary foreign legion formed in France was betrayed in advance by the Lamartines of the Provisional Government to the government which was to be overthrown, as occurred in Belgium and Baden.

After the March Revolution, Marx went to Cologne and founded there the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*,<sup>2</sup> which was in existence from June 1, 1848 to May 19, 1849—the only paper which represented the standpoint of the proletariat within the democratic movement of the time, as shown in its unreserved championship of the Paris June insurgents of 1848, which cost the paper the defection of almost all its shareholders. In vain the *Kreuzzeitung*<sup>3</sup> pointed to the "Chimborazo<sup>4</sup> impudence" with which the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* attacked everything sacred, from the king and vice-regent of the realm down to the gendarme, and that, too, in a Prussian fortress with a garrison of 8,000 at that time. In vain was the rage of the Rhenish liberal philistines, who had suddenly become reactionary. In vain was the paper suspended by martial law in Cologne for a lengthy period in the autumn of 1848. In vain the Reich Ministry of Justice in

<sup>1</sup> *German Brussels Gazette*.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> *New Rhenish Gazette*.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup> *Kreuzzeitung* [*Gazette of the Cross*]: This was the name generally applied to the reactionary monarchist daily, the *Neue Preussische Zeitung* [*New Prussian Gazette*], which began to appear in Berlin in 1848. Its head bore a cross.—Ed.

<sup>4</sup> *Chimborazo*: One of the highest peaks of the Andes Mountains in South America.—Ed.

Frankfort denounced article after article to the Cologne Public Prosecutor in order that judicial proceedings should be taken. Under the very eyes of the Military Guard the paper calmly went on being edited and printed, and its distribution and reputation increased with the vehemence of its attacks on the government and the bourgeoisie. When the Prussian *coup d'état* took place in November 1848, the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* called at the head of each issue upon the people to refuse to pay taxes and to meet violence with violence. In the spring of 1849, both on this account and because of another article, it was made to face a jury, but on both occasions was acquitted. Finally, when the May risings of 1849 in Dresden and the Rhine province had been suppressed, and the Prussian campaign against the Baden-Palatinate rising had been inaugurated by the concentration and mobilization of considerable masses of troops, the government believed itself strong enough to suppress the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* by force. The last number—printed in red ink—appeared on May 19.

Marx again went to Paris, but only a few weeks after the demonstration of June 13, 1849, he was faced by the French government with the choice of either shifting his residence to Brittany or leaving France. He preferred the latter and moved to London, where he has lived uninterruptedly ever since.

An attempt to continue to issue the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* in the form of a review (in Hamburg, 1850) had to be given up after a while in view of the ever-increasing violence of the reaction. Immediately after the *coup d'état* in France in December 1851, Marx published: *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (Boston 1852; second edition, Hamburg 1869, shortly before the war). In 1853 he wrote: *Revelations About the Cologne Communist Trial* (first printed in Basle, later in Boston, and again recently in Leipzig).

After the condemnation of the members of the Communist League in Cologne, Marx withdrew from political agitation and for ten years devoted himself, on the one hand, to the study of the rich treasures offered by the library of the British Museum in the sphere of political economy, and, on the other hand, to writing for the *New York Tribune*,<sup>1</sup> which up to the outbreak of the American Civil War published not only contributions signed by him but also numerous leading articles on conditions in Europe and Asia from his pen. His attacks on Lord Palmerston, based on an exhaustive study of English official documents, were reprinted in London in pamphlet form.

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<sup>1</sup> *New York Daily Tribune*: A daily democratic newspaper to which Marx contributed in 1851-62. It appeared in New York in 1841-1924.—Ed.

As the first fruit of his many years of study of economics, there appeared in 1859 *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Part I (Berlin, Duncker). This work contains the first coherent exposition of the Marxian theory of value, including the doctrine of money. During the Italian War Marx, in the German newspaper *Das Volk*,<sup>1</sup> appearing in London, attacked Bonapartism, which at that time was tinted liberal and playing the part of liberator of the oppressed nationalities, and also the Prussian policy of the day, which under the cover of neutrality was seeking to fish in troubled waters. In this connection it was necessary to attack also Herr Karl Vogt, who at that time, on the commission of Prince Napoleon (Plon-Plon) and in the pay of Louis Napoleon, was carrying on agitation for the neutrality, and indeed the sympathy, of Germany. When Vogt heaped upon him the most abominable and deliberately false calumnies, Marx answered with: *Herr Vogt* (London, 1860), in which Vogt and the other gentlemen of the imperialist sham-democratic gang were exposed, and Vogt himself on the basis of both external and internal evidence was convicted of receiving bribes from the December empire. The confirmation came just ten years later: in the list of the Bonaparte hirelings, found in the Tuileries in 1870 and published by the September government, there was the following entry under the letter V: "Vogt—in August 1859 there were remitted to him—Fr. 40,000."

Finally, in 1867 there appeared in Hamburg: *Capital, a Critical Analysis of Capitalist Production*, Volume I, Marx's chief work, which expounds the foundations of his economic-socialist conceptions and the main features of his criticism of existing society, the capitalist mode of production and its consequences. The second edition of this epoch-making work appeared in 1872; the author is engaged in the elaboration of the second volume.

Meanwhile the labour movement in various countries of Europe had so far regained strength that Marx could entertain the idea of realizing a long-cherished wish: the foundation of a Workers' Association embracing the most advanced countries of Europe and America, which would demonstrate bodily, so to speak, the international character of the socialist movement both to the workers themselves and to the bourgeois and the governments—for the encouragement and strengthening of the proletariat, for striking fear into the hearts of its enemies. A mass meeting in favour of Poland, which had just then again been crushed by Russia, held on September 28, 1864, in St. Martin's Hall in London, provided the oc-

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<sup>1</sup> *Das Volk* [*The People*]: This German newspaper appeared in London from May to August 1859. Marx was one of its close collaborators.—Ed.

casation for bringing forward the matter, which was enthusiastically taken up. The *International Working Men's Association* was founded; a Provisional General Council, with its seat in London, was elected at the meeting, and Marx was the soul of this as of all subsequent General Councils up to the Hague Congress. He drafted almost every one of the documents issued by the General Council of the International, from the *Inaugural Address*, 1864, to the *Address on the Civil War in France*, 1871. To describe Marx's activity in the International is to write the history of this Association, which in any case still lives in the memory of European workers.

The fall of the Paris Commune put the International in an impossible position. It was thrust into the forefront of European history at a moment when it had everywhere been deprived of all possibility of successful practical action. The events which raised it to the position of the seventh Great Power simultaneously forbade it to mobilize its fighting forces and employ them in action, on pain of inevitable defeat and the setting back of the labour movement for decades. In addition, from various sides elements were pushing themselves forward that sought to exploit the suddenly enhanced fame of the Association for the purpose of gratifying personal vanity or personal ambition, without understanding the real position of the International or without regard for it. A heroic decision had to be taken, and it was again Marx who took it and who carried it through at the Hague Congress. In a solemn resolution, the International disclaimed all responsibility for the doings of the Bakunists, who formed the central point of those unreasonable and unsavoury elements. Then, in view of the impossibility of also meeting, in the face of the general reaction, the increased demands which were being imposed upon it, and of maintaining its complete efficacy other than by a series of sacrifices which would have drained the labour movement of its lifeblood—in view of this situation, the International withdrew from the stage for the time being by transferring the General Council to America. The results have proved how correct was this decision—which was at the time, and has been since, so often censured. On the one hand, it put a stop then and since to all attempts to make useless *putsches* in the name of the International, while, on the other hand, the continuing close intercourse between the socialist workers' parties of the various countries proved that the consciousness of the identity of interests and of the solidarity of the proletariat of all countries evoked by the International is able to assert itself even without the bond of a formal international association, which for the moment had become a fetter.

After the Hague Congress, Marx at last found peace and leisure again for resuming his theoretical work, and it is to be

hoped he' will be able before long to have the second volume of *Capital* ready for the press.

Of the many important discoveries through which Marx has inscribed his name in the annals of science, we can here dwell on only two.

The first is the revolution brought about by him in the whole conception of world history. The whole previous view of history was based on the conception that the ultimate causes of all historical changes are to be looked for in the changing ideas of human beings, and that of all historical changes political changes are the most important and are dominant in the whole of history. But the question was not asked as to whence the ideas come into men's minds and what the driving causes of the political changes are. Only upon the newer school of French, and partly also of English, historians had the conviction forced itself that, since the Middle Ages at least, the driving force in European history was the struggle of the developing bourgeoisie with the feudal aristocracy for social and political domination. Now Marx has proved that the whole of previous history is a history of class struggles, that in all the simple and complicated political struggles the only thing at issue has been the social and political rule of social classes, the maintenance of domination by older classes and the conquest of domination by newly arising classes. To what, however, do these classes owe their origin and their continued existence? They owe it to the particular material, physically sensible conditions in which society at a given period produces and exchanges its means of subsistence. The feudal rule of the Middle Ages rested on the self-sufficient economy of small peasant communities, which themselves produced almost all their requirements, in which there was almost no exchange and which received from the arms-bearing nobility protection from without and national or at least political cohesion. When the towns arose and with them separate handicraft industry and trade intercourse, at first internal and later international, the urban bourgeoisie developed, and already during the Middle Ages achieved, in struggle with the nobility, its' inclusion in the feudal order as likewise a privileged estate. But with the discovery of the extra-European world, from the middle of the fifteenth century onwards, this bourgeoisie acquired a far more extensive sphere of trade and therewith a new spur for its industry; in the most important branches handicrafts were supplanted by manufacture, now on a factory scale, and this again was supplanted by large-scale industry, become possible owing to the discoveries of the previous century, especially that of the steam engine. Large-scale industry, in its turn, reacted on trade by driving out the old

manual labour in backward countries, and creating the present-day new means of communication: steam engines, railways, electric telegraphy, in the more developed ones. Thus the bourgeoisie came more and more to combine social wealth and social power in its hands, while it still for a long period remained excluded from political power, which was in the hands of the nobility and the monarchy supported by the nobility. But at a certain stage—in France since the Great Revolution—it also conquered political power, and now in turn became the ruling class over the proletariat and small peasants. From this point of view all the historical phenomena are explicable in the simplest possible way—with sufficient knowledge of the particular economic condition of society, which it is true is totally lacking in our professional historians, and in the same way the conceptions and ideas of each historical period are most simply to be explained from the economic conditions of life and from the social and political relations of the period, which are in turn determined by these economic conditions. History was for the first time placed on its real basis; the palpable but previously totally overlooked fact that men must first of all eat, drink, have shelter and clothing, therefore must *work*, before they can fight for domination, pursue politics, religion, philosophy, etc.—this palpable fact at last came into its historical rights.

This new conception of history, however, was of supreme significance for the socialist outlook. It showed that all previous history moved in class antagonisms and class struggles, that there have always existed ruling and ruled, exploiting and exploited classes, and that the great majority of mankind has always been condemned to arduous labour and little enjoyment. Why is this? Simply because in all earlier stages of development of mankind production was so little developed that the historical development could proceed only in this antagonistic form, that historical progress as a whole was assigned to the activity of a small privileged minority, while the great mass remained condemned to producing by their labour their own meagre means of subsistence and also the increasingly rich means of the privileged. But the same investigation of history, which in this way provides a natural and reasonable explanation of the previous class rule, otherwise only explicable from the wickedness of man, also leads to the realization that, in consequence of the so tremendously increased productive forces of the present time, even the last pretext has vanished for a division of mankind into rulers and ruled, exploiters and exploited, at least in the most advanced countries; that the ruling big bourgeoisie has fulfilled its historic mission, that it is no longer capable of the leadership of society and has even become a hindrance to the development of

production, as the trade crises, and especially the last great collapse, and the depressed condition of industry in all countries have proved; that historical leadership has passed to the proletariat, a class which, owing to its whole position in society, can only free itself by abolishing altogether all class rule, all servitude and all exploitation; and that the social productive forces, which have outgrown the control of the bourgeoisie, are only waiting for the associated proletariat to take possession of them in order to bring about a state of things in which every member of society will be enabled to participate not only in production but also in the distribution and administration of social wealth, and which so increases the social productive forces and their yield by planned operation of the whole of production that the satisfaction of all reasonable needs will be assured to everyone in an ever-increasing measure.

The second important discovery of Marx is the final elucidation of the relation between capital and labour, in other words, the demonstration how, within present society and under the existing capitalist mode of production, the exploitation of the worker by the capitalist takes place. Ever since political economy had put forward the proposition that labour is the source of all wealth and of all value, the question became inevitable: How is this then to be reconciled with the fact that the wageworker does not receive the whole sum of value created by his labour but has to surrender a part of it to the capitalist? Both the bourgeois economists and the Socialists exerted themselves to give a scientifically valid answer to this question, but in vain, until at last Marx came forward with the solution. This solution is as follows: The present-day capitalist mode of production presupposes the existence of two social classes—on the one hand, that of the capitalists, who are in possession of the means of production and subsistence, and, on the other hand, that of the proletarians, who, being excluded from this possession, have only a single commodity for sale, their labour power, and who therefore have to sell this labour power of theirs in order to obtain possession of means of subsistence. The value of a commodity is, however, determined by the socially necessary quantity of labour embodied in its production, and, therefore, also in its reproduction; the value of the labour power of an average human being during a day, month or year is determined, therefore, by the quantity of labour embodied in the quantity of means of subsistence necessary for the maintenance of this labour power during a day, month or year. Let us assume that the means of subsistence of a worker for one day require six hours of labour for their production, or, what is the same thing, that the labour contained in them represents a quantity of labour of six hours; then the value of labour



power for one day will be expressed in a sum of money which also embodies six hours of labour. Let us assume further that the capitalist who employs our worker pays him this sum in return, pays him, therefore, the full value of his labour power. If now the worker works six hours of the day for the capitalist, he has completely replaced the latter's outlay—six hours' labour for six hours' labour. But then there would be nothing in it for the capitalist, and the latter therefore looks at the matter quite differently. He says: I have bought the labour power of this worker not for six hours but for a whole day, and accordingly he makes the worker work 8, 10, 12, 14 or more hours, according to circumstances, so that the product of the seventh, eighth and following hours is a product of unpaid labour and wanders, to begin with, into the pocket of the capitalist. Thus the worker in the service of the capitalist not only reproduces the value of his labour power, for which he receives pay, but over and above that he also produces a *surplus value* which, appropriated in the first place by the capitalist, is in its further course divided according to definite economic laws among the whole capitalist class and forms the basic stock from which arise ground rent, profit, accumulation of capital, in short, all the wealth consumed or accumulated by the non-labouring classes. But this proved that the acquisition of riches by the present-day capitalists consists just as much in the appropriation of the unpaid labour of others as that of the slave owner or the feudal lord exploiting serf labour, and that all these forms of exploitation are only to be distinguished by the difference in manner and method by which the unpaid labour is appropriated. This, however, also removed the last justification for all the hypocritical phrases of the possessing classes to the effect that in the present social order right and justice, equality of rights and duties and a general harmony of interests prevail, and present-day bourgeois society, no less than its predecessors, was exposed as a grandiose institution for the exploitation of the huge majority of the people by a small, ever-diminishing minority.

Modern, scientific Socialism is based on these two important facts. In the second volume of *Capital* these and other hardly less important scientific discoveries concerning the capitalist system of society will be further developed, and thereby those aspects also of political economy not touched upon in the first volume will undergo revolutionization. May it be vouchsafed to Marx to be able soon to have it ready for the press.

Written by Engels in June, 1877  
Published in the *Volkskalender*, an  
almanac which appeared in Bruns-  
wick in 1878

Printed according to the almanac  
text

Translated from the German

## Frederick Engels

### SPEECH AT THE GRAVESIDE OF KARL MARX

On the 14th of March, at a quarter to three in the afternoon, the greatest living thinker ceased to think. He had been left alone for scarcely two minutes, and when we came back we found him in his armchair, peacefully gone to sleep—but forever.

An immeasurable loss has been sustained both by the militant proletariat of Europe and America, and by historical science, in the death of this man. The gap that has been left by the departure of this mighty spirit will soon enough make itself felt.

Just as Darwin discovered the law of development of organic nature, so Marx discovered the law of development of human history: the simple fact, hitherto concealed by an overgrowth of ideology, that mankind must first of all eat, drink, have shelter and clothing, before it can pursue politics, science, art, religion, etc.; that therefore the production of the immediate material means of subsistence and consequently the degree of economic development attained by a given people or during a given epoch form the foundation upon which the state institutions, the legal conceptions, the ideas on art, and even on religion, of the people concerned have been evolved, and in the light of which they must, therefore, be explained, instead of *vice versa*, as had hitherto been the case.

But that is not all. Marx also discovered the special law of motion governing the present-day capitalist mode of production and the bourgeois society that this mode of production has created. The discovery of surplus value suddenly threw light on the problem, in trying to solve which all previous investigations, of both bourgeois economists and socialist critics, had been groping in the dark.

Two such discoveries would be enough for one lifetime. Happy the man to whom it is granted to make even one such discovery. But in every single field which Marx investigated—and he investigated very many fields, none of them superficially—in every field, even in that of mathematics, he made independent discoveries.

Such was the man of science. But this was not even half the man. Science was for Marx a historically dynamic, revolutionary

force. However great the joy with which he welcomed a new discovery in some theoretical science whose practical application perhaps it was as yet quite impossible to envisage, he experienced quite another kind of joy when the discovery involved immediate revolutionary changes in industry, and in historical development in general. For example, he followed closely the development of the discoveries made in the field of electricity and recently those of Marcel Deprez.

For Marx was before all else a revolutionist. His real mission in life was to contribute, in one way or another, to the overthrow of capitalist society and of the state institutions which it had brought into being, to contribute to the liberation of the modern proletariat, which *he* was the first to make conscious of its own position and its needs, conscious of the conditions of its emancipation. Fighting was his element. And he fought with a passion, a tenacity and a success such as few could rival. His work on the first *Rheinische Zeitung* (1842), the Paris *Vorwärts*<sup>1</sup> (1844), the *Deutsche Brüsseler Zeitung* (1847), the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* (1848-49), the *New York Tribune* (1852-61), and in addition to these a host of military pamphlets, work in organizations in Paris, Brussels and London, and finally, crowning all, the formation of the great International Working Men's Association—this was indeed an achievement of which its founder might well have been proud even if he had done nothing else.

And, consequently, Marx was the best hated and most calumniated man of his time. Governments, both absolutist and republican, deported him from their territories. Bourgeois, whether conservative or ultra-democratic, vied with one another in heaping slanders upon him. All this he brushed aside as though it were cobweb, ignoring it, answering only when extreme necessity compelled him. And he died beloved, revered and mourned by millions of revolutionary fellow workers—from the mines of Siberia to California, in all parts of Europe and America—and I make bold to say that though he may have had many opponents he had hardly one personal enemy.

His name will endure through the ages, and so also will his work.

Speech delivered in English by  
Engels at Highgate Cemetery, London,  
on March 17, 1883

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<sup>1</sup> *Vorwärts* [Forward]: A radical newspaper of the German Socialists in emigration, one of whose contributors was Karl Marx. It appeared in Germany at Paris in 1844.—Ed.

*Frederick Engels*

THE ORIGIN OF THE FAMILY,  
PRIVATE PROPERTY AND THE STATE

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION 1884

The following chapters constitute, in a sense, the fulfilment of a bequest. It was no less a person than Karl Marx who had planned to present the results of Morgan's researches in connection with the conclusions arrived at by his own—within certain limits I might say our own—materialist investigation of history and thus make clear for the first time their whole significance. For Morgan rediscovered in America, in his own way, the materialist conception of history that had been discovered by Marx forty years ago, and in his comparison of barbarism and civilization was led by this conception to the same conclusions, in the main points, as Marx had arrived at. And just as *Capital* was for years both zealously plagiarized and persistently hushed up on the part of the official economists in Germany, so was Morgan's *Ancient Society*<sup>1</sup> treated by the spokesmen of "prehistoric" science in England. My work can offer but a meagre substitute for that which my departed friend was not destined to accomplish. However, I have before me, in his extensive extracts from Morgan,<sup>2</sup> critical notes which I reproduce here wherever this is at all possible.

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<sup>1</sup> *Ancient Society, or Researches in the Lines of Human Progress from Savagery through Barbarism to Civilization.* By Lewis H. Morgan, London, MacMillan & Co., 1877. This book was printed in America, and is remarkably difficult to obtain in London. The author died a few years ago. [Note by Engels.]

<sup>2</sup> The reference is to Karl Marx's *Abstract of Morgan's "Ancient Society,"* published in Russian in 1945. See *Marx-Engels Archive*, vol. IX.—Ed.

According to the materialistic conception, the determining factor in history is, in the last resort, the production and reproduction of immediate life. But this itself is of a twofold character. On the one hand, the production of the means of subsistence, of food, clothing and shelter and the tools requisite therefore; on the other, the production of human beings themselves, the propagation of the species.<sup>1</sup> The social institutions under which men of a definite historical epoch and of a definite country live are conditioned by both kinds of production: by the stage of development of labour, on the one hand, and of the family, on the other. The less the development of labour, and the more limited its volume of production and, therefore, the wealth of society, the more preponderatingly does the social order appear to be dominated by ties of sex. However, within this structure of society based on ties of sex, the productivity of labour develops more and more; with it, private property and exchange, differences in wealth, the possibility of utilizing the labour power of others, and thereby the basis of class antagonisms: new social elements, which strive in the course of generations to adapt the old structure of society to the new conditions, until, finally, the incompatibility of the two leads to a complete revolution. The old society based on sex groups bursts asunder in the collision of the newly-developed social classes; in its place a new society appears, constituted in a state, the lower units of which are no longer sex groups but territorial groups, a society in which the family system is entirely dominated by the property system, and in which the class antagonisms and class struggles, which make up the content of all hitherto *written* history, now freely develop.

Morgan's great merit lies in having discovered and reconstructed this prehistoric foundation of our written history in its main features, and in having found in the sex groups of the North American Indians the key to the most important, hitherto insoluble, riddles of the earliest Greek, Roman and German history. His book, however, was not the work of one day. He grappled with his material for nearly forty years until he completely mastered it. That is why his book is one of the few epoch-making works of our time.

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<sup>1</sup> Engels is here guilty of inexactitude by citing the propagation of the species alongside of the production of the means of subsistence as causes determining the development of society and of social institutions. In the text proper of the *Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, Engels himself demonstrated by an analysis of concrete material that the mode of material production is the principal factor conditioning the development of society and of social institutions.—*Ed.*

In the following exposition the reader will, on the whole, easily be able to distinguish between what has been taken from Morgan and what I have added myself. In the historical sections dealing with Greece and Rome I have not limited myself to Morgan's data, but have added what I had at my disposal. The sections dealing with the Celts and the Germans are substantially my own; here Morgan had at his disposal almost exclusively secondhand sources, and, as far as German conditions were concerned—with the exception of Tacitus—only the wretched liberal falsifications of Mr. Freeman. The economic arguments, sufficient for Morgan's purpose but wholly inadequate for my own, have all been elaborated afresh by myself. And, finally, I of course am responsible for all conclusions wherever Morgan is not expressly quoted.

Written by Engels for the first edition of his book *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, which appeared in Zurich in 1884

Printed according to the text of the book

Translated from the German

## PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION

1891

The previous large editions of this work have been out of print now for almost six months and the publisher has for some time past desired me to prepare a new edition. More urgent tasks have hitherto prevented me from doing so. Seven years have elapsed since the first edition appeared, and during this period our knowledge of the original forms of the family has made important progress. It was, therefore, necessary diligently to apply the hand to the work of amplification and improvement, particularly in view of the fact that the proposed stereotyping of the present text will make further changes on my part impossible for some time to come.

I have, therefore, submitted the whole text to a careful revision, and have made a number of additions, in which, I hope, due regard has been paid to the present state of science. Further, in the course of this preface, I give a brief review of the development of the history of the family from Bachofen to Morgan, principally because the English prehistoric school, which is tinged with chauvinism, continues to do its utmost to kill by silence the revolution Morgan's

discoveries have made in conceptions of the history of primitive society, although it does not hesitate in the least to appropriate his results. Elsewhere, too, this English example is followed only too often.

My work has been translated into various languages. First into Italian: *L'origine della famiglia, della proprietà privata e dello stato, versione riveduta dall' autore, di Pasquale Martignetti*; Benevento 1885. Then Rumanian: *Origina familiei, proprietatei private si a statului, traducere de Joan Nadejde*, in the Yassy periodical *Contemporarul*, September 1885 to May 1886. Further into Danish: *Familjens, Privatejendommens og Statens Oprindelse, Dansk, af Forfatteren gennemgaaet Udgave, besørget af Gerson Trier*, Köbenhavn 1888. A French translation by Henri Ravé based on the present German edition is in the press.

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Until the beginning of the sixties there was no such thing as a history of the family. In this sphere historical science was still completely under the influence of the Five Books of Moses. The patriarchal form of the family, described there in greater detail than anywhere else, was not only implicitly accepted as the oldest form of the family, but also—after excluding polygamy—identified with the present-day bourgeois family, as if the family had really undergone no historical development at all. At most it was admitted that a period of promiscuous sexual relationships might have existed in primeval times. To be sure, in addition to monogamy, Oriental polygamy and Indo-Tibetan polyandry were also known, but these three forms could not be arranged in any historical sequence and appeared disconnectedly alongside of each other. That among certain peoples of ancient times, and among some still existing savages, the line of descent was reckoned not from the father but from the mother and, therefore, the female lineage alone was regarded as valid; that among many peoples of today marriage within definite larger groups—not subjected to closer investigation at that time—is prohibited, and that this custom is to be met with in all parts of the world—these facts were indeed known and new examples were constantly being brought to light. But nobody knew what to do with them, and even in E. B. Tylor's *Researches into the Early History of Mankind*, etc. (1865),<sup>1</sup> they figure merely as "strange

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<sup>1</sup> E. B. Tylor, *Researches into the Early History of Mankind and the Development of Civilization*, London 1865.—Ed.

customs" along with the taboo in force among some savages against the touching of burning wood with iron tools, and similar religious bosh and nonsense.

The study of the history of the family dates from 1861, from the publication of Bachofen's *Mother Right*. In this work the author advances the following propositions: 1) that in the beginning humanity lived in a state of sexual promiscuity, which the author unhappily designates as "hetaerism"; 2) that such promiscuity excludes all certainty as regards paternity, that lineage, therefore, could be reckoned only through the female line—according to mother right—and that originally this was the case among all the peoples of antiquity; 3) that consequently women, who, as mothers, were the only definitely ascertainable parents of the younger generation, were treated with a high degree of consideration and respect, which, according to Bachofen's conception, was enhanced to the complete rule of women (gynecocracy); 4) that the transition to monogamy, where the woman belongs exclusively to one man, implied the violation of a primeval religious injunction (that is, in actual fact, the violation of the ancient traditional right of the other men to the same woman), a violation which had to be atoned for, or the toleration of which had to be purchased, by surrendering the woman for a limited period of time.

Bachofen finds evidence in support of these propositions in countless passages of ancient classical literature, which he had assembled with extraordinary diligence. According to him, the evolution from "hetaerism" to monogamy, and from mother right to father right, takes place, particularly among the Greeks, as a consequence of the evolution of religious ideas, the intrusion of new deities, representatives of the new outlook, into the old traditional pantheon representing the old outlook, so that the latter is more and more driven into the background by the former. Thus, according to Bachofen, it is not the development of the actual conditions under which men live, but the religious reflection of these conditions of life in the minds of men that brought about the historical changes in the mutual social position of man and woman. Bachofen accordingly points to the *Orestia* of Aeschylus as a dramatic depiction of the struggle between declining mother right and rising and victorious father right in the Heroic Age. Clytemnestra has slain her husband Agamemnon, just returned from the Trojan War, for the sake of her lover Aegisthus; but Orestes, her son by Agamemnon, avenges his father's murder by slaying his mother. For this he is pursued by the Erinyes, the demonic defenders of mother right, according to which matricide is the most heinous and inexpiable of crimes. But Apollo, who through his oracle has incited Orestes to commit



this deed, and Athena, who is called in as arbiter—the two deities which here represent the new order, based on father right—protect him. Athena hears both sides. The whole controversy is briefly summarized in the debate which now ensues between Orestes and the Erinyes. Orestes declares that Clytemnestra is guilty of a double outrage; for in killing *her* husband she also killed *his* father. Why then have the Erinyes persecuted him and not Clytemnestra, who is much the greater culprit? The reply is striking:

*"Unrelated by blood was she to the man that she slew."*

The murder of a man not related by blood, even though he be the husband of the murderess, is expiable and does not concern the Erinyes. Their function is to avenge only murders among blood relatives, and the most heinous of all these, according to mother right, is matricide. Apollo now intervenes in defence of Orestes. Athena calls upon the Areopagites—the Athenian jurors—to vote on the question. The votes for acquittal and for conviction are equal. Then Athena, as President of the Court, casts her vote in favour of Orestes and acquits him. Father right has gained the day over mother right. The "gods of junior lineage," as they are described by the Erinyes themselves, are victorious over the Erinyes, and the latter allow themselves finally to be persuaded to assume a new office in the service of the new order.

This new but absolutely correct interpretation of the *Oresteia* is one of the best and most beautiful passages in the whole book, but it shows at the same time that Bachofen himself believes in the Erinyes, Apollo and Athena at least as much as Aeschylus did in his day; he, in fact, believes that in the Heroic Age of Greece they performed the miracle of overthrowing mother right and replacing it by father right. Clearly, such a conception—which regards religion as the decisive lever in world history—must finally end in sheer mysticism. It is, therefore, an arduous and by no means always profitable task to wade through Bachofen's bulky quarto volume. But all this does not detract from his merit as a pioneer, for he was the first to substitute for mere phrases about an unknown primitive condition of promiscuous sexual intercourse proof that ancient classical literature teems with traces of a condition that had in fact existed before monogamy among the Greeks and the Asiatics, in which not only a man had sexual intercourse with more than one woman, but a woman had sexual intercourse with more than one man, without violating the established custom; that this custom did not disappear without leaving traces in the form of the limited surrender by which women were compelled to purchase their right to monogamian marriage; that descent, therefore, could

originally be reckoned only in the female line, from mother to mother; that this exclusive validity of the female line persisted far into the time of monogamy with assured, or at least recognized, paternity; and that this original position of the mother as the sole certain parent of her children assured her, and thus women in general, a higher social status than they have ever enjoyed since. Bachofen did not express these propositions as clearly as this—his mystical outlook prevented him from doing so; but he proved that they were correct, and this, in 1861, meant a complete revolution.

Bachofen's bulky tome was written in German, that is, in the language of the nation which, at that time, interested itself less than any other in the prehistory of the present-day family. He, therefore, remained unknown. His immediate successor in this field appeared in 1865, without ever having heard of Bachofen.

This successor was J. F. McLennan, the direct opposite of his predecessor. Instead of the talented mystic, we have here the dry-as-dust lawyer; instead of exuberant poetic fancy, we have the plausible arguments of the advocate pleading his case. McLennan finds among many savage, barbarian and even civilized peoples of ancient and modern times a form of marriage in which the bridegroom, alone or accompanied by friends, has to feign to carry off the bride from her relatives by force. This custom must be the survival of a previous custom, whereby the men of one tribe acquired their wives from outside, from other tribes, by actually abducting them by force. How then did this "marriage by abduction" originate? As long as men could find sufficient women in their own tribe there was no occasion for it whatsoever. But quite as often we find that among undeveloped peoples certain groups exist (which round about 1865 were still often identified with the tribes themselves) within which marriage is forbidden, so that the men are obliged to secure their wives, and the women their husbands, from outside the group; while among others the custom prevails that the men of a certain group are compelled to find their wives only within their own group. McLennan calls the first type of group exogamous, and the second endogamous, and without further ado establishes a rigid antithesis between exogamous and endogamous "tribes." And although his own researches into exogamy bring under his very nose the fact that in many, if not most, or even all cases this antithesis exists only in his own imagination, he nevertheless makes it the foundation of his entire theory. Accordingly, exogamous tribes may procure their wives only from other tribes; and in the state of permanent intertribal warfare that is characteristic of savagery this, he believes, could be done only by abduction.

McLennan argues further: Whence this custom of exogamy? The conceptions of consanguinity and incest could have nothing to do with it, for these are things which developed only much later. But the custom, widespread among savages, of killing female children immediately after birth, might. This custom created a superfluity of men in each individual tribe, the necessary and immediate sequel of which was the common possession of a woman by a number of men—polyandry. The consequence of this again was that the mother of a child was known, but the father was not, hence kinship was reckoned only in the female line to the exclusion of the male—mother right. And another consequence of the dearth of women within a tribe—a dearth mitigated but not overcome by polyandry—was precisely the systematic, forcible abduction of women of other tribes. "As exogamy and polyandry are referable to one and the same cause—a want of balance between the sexes—we are forced to regard all the exogamous races as having originally been polyandrous . . . . Therefore, we must hold it to be beyond dispute that among exogamous races the first system of kinship was that which recognized blood ties through mothers only." (McLennan, *Studies in Ancient History*, 1886. *Primitive Marriage*,<sup>1</sup> p. 124.)

McLennan's merit lies in having drawn attention to the general prevalence and great importance of what he terms exogamy. But he by no means discovered the existence of exogamous groups, and still less did he understand it. Apart from the earlier, isolated notes of many observers which served as McLennan's sources, Latham (*Descriptive Ethnology*, 1859<sup>2</sup>) exactly and correctly described this institution among the Indian Magars and declared that it was generally prevalent and existed in all parts of the world—a passage which McLennan himself quotes. And our Morgan, too, as far back as 1847, in his letters on the Iroquois (in the *American Review*) and in 1851 in *The League of the Iroquois*<sup>3</sup> proved that it existed in this tribe, and described it correctly, whereas, as we shall see, McLennan's lawyer's mentality caused far greater confusion on this subject than Bachofen's mystical fantasy did in the sphere of mother right. It is also to McLennan's credit that he recognized the system of tracing descent through mothers as the original one, although, as he himself admitted later, Bachofen anticipated him in this. But here again he is far from clear; he speaks continually of "kinship through females only" and constantly applies this expression—cor-

<sup>1</sup> J. F. McLennan, *Studies in Ancient History*, comprising a reprint of *Primitive Marriage*. London 1886.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> R. G. Latham, *op. cit.*, vols. I-II, London 1859.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup> L. H. Morgan, *League of the Ho-dé-no-sau-nee, or Iroquois*. Rochester 1851.—Ed.

rect for an earlier stage—also to later stages of development, where, although descent and inheritance are still exclusively reckoned in the female line, kinship is also recognized and expressed in the male line. This is the restricted outlook of the jurist, who creates a rigid legal term for himself and continues to apply it without modification to conditions which in the meantime have rendered it inapplicable.

In spite of its plausibility, McLennan's theory evidently did not seem to be too well-founded even to the author himself. At least, he himself is struck by the fact that "it is observable that the form of [mock] capture is now most distinctly marked and impressive just among those races which have *male* kinship [meaning descent through the male line]" (p. 140). And, again: "It is a curious fact that nowhere now, that we are aware of, is infanticide a *system* where exogamy and the earliest form of kinship coexist" (p. 146). Both these facts directly refute his interpretation, and he can oppose to them only new, still more intricate hypotheses.

Nevertheless, in England his theory met with great approbation and evoked great response. McLennan was generally accepted there as the founder of the history of the family, and the most eminent authority in this field. His antithesis between exogamous and endogamous "tribes," notwithstanding the few exceptions and modifications admitted, remained nevertheless the recognized foundation of the prevailing view, and was the blinker which made any free survey of the field under investigation and, consequently, any definite progress, impossible. The overrating of McLennan, which became the vogue in England and, following the English fashion, elsewhere as well, makes it a duty to point out in contrast that the harm he caused with his completely erroneous antithesis between exogamous and endogamous "tribes" outweighs the good done by his researches.

Meanwhile, more and more facts soon came to light, which did not fit into his neat scheme. McLennan knew only three forms of marriage—polygamy, polyandry and monogamy. But once attention had been directed to this point, more and more proofs were discovered of the fact that among undeveloped peoples forms of marriage existed in which a group of men possessed a group of women in common; and Lubbock (in his *The Origin of Civilization*, 1870<sup>1</sup>) acknowledged this group marriage ("communal marriage") to be a historical fact.

Immediately after, in 1871, Morgan appeared with new and,

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<sup>1</sup> J. Lubbock, *The Origin of Civilization and the Primitive Condition of Man. Mental and Social Condition of Savages*. London 1870.—Ed.

in many respects, conclusive material. He had become convinced that the peculiar system of kinship prevailing among the Iroquois was common to all the aborigines of the United States and was thus spread over a whole continent, although it conflicted directly with the degrees of kinship actually arising from the connubial system in force there. He thereupon prevailed on the American Federal Government to collect information about the kinship systems of the other peoples, on the basis of questionnaires and tables drawn up by himself; and he discovered from the answers: 1) that the American Indian system of kinship prevailed also among numerous tribes in Asia, and, in a somewhat modified form, in Africa and Australia; 2) that it was completely explained by a form of group marriage, now approaching extinction, in Hawaii and in other Australian Islands; and 3) that, however, alongside this marriage form, a system of kinship prevailed in these same islands which could only be explained by a still earlier but now extinct form of group marriage. He published the collected data and his conclusions from them in his *Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity*, 1871<sup>1</sup> and thereby carried the discussion on to an infinitely wider field. Taking the systems of kinship as his starting point, he reconstructed the forms of the family corresponding to them, and thereby opened up a new avenue of investigation and a more far-reaching retrospect into the prehistory of mankind. Were this method to be recognized as valid, McLennan's neat construction would be resolved into thin air.

McLennan defended his theory in a new edition of *Primitive Marriage (Studies in Ancient History)*, 1876). While he himself very artificially constructs a history of the family out of sheer hypotheses, he demands of Lubbock and Morgan not only proofs for every one of their statements, but proofs of incontestable validity such as alone would be admitted in a Scottish court of law. And this is done by the man who, from the close relationship between one's mother's brother and one's sister's son among the Germans (Tacitus, *Germania*, C. 20), from Caesar's report that the Britons in groups of ten or twelve possessed their wives in common, and from all the other reports of ancient writers concerning community of women among the barbarians, unhesitatingly concludes that polyandry was the rule among all these peoples! It is like listening to counsel for the prosecution, who permits himself every license in preparing his own case, but demands the most formal and legally most valid proof for every word of counsel for the defence.

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<sup>1</sup> L. H. Morgan, *Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity of the Human Family*. Washington 1871.—Ed.

Group marriage is a pure figment of the imagination, he asserts, and thus falls back far behind Bachofen. Morgan's systems of kinship, he says, are nothing more than mere precepts on social politeness, proved by the fact that the Indians also address strangers, white men, as "brother," or "father." It is as if one were to argue that the terms father, mother, brother, sister are merely empty forms of address because Catholic priests and abbesses are likewise addressed as father and mother, and because monks and nuns, and even freemasons and members of English craft unions, in solemn session assembled, are addressed as brother and sister. In short, McLennan's defence was miserably weak.

One point, however, remained on which he had not been challenged. The antithesis between exogamous and endogamous "tribes," upon which his whole system rested, was not only unshaken, but was even generally accepted as the pivot of the entire history of the family. It was admitted that McLennan's attempt to explain this antithesis was inadequate and contradicted the very facts he himself had enumerated. But the antithesis itself, the existence of two mutually exclusive types of separate and independent tribes, one of which took its wives from within the tribe, while this was absolutely forbidden to the other—this passed as incontrovertible gospel truth. Compare, for example, Giraud-Teulon's *Origin of the Family* (1874)<sup>1</sup> and even Lubbock's *Origin of Civilization* (Fourth Edition, 1882).

This is the point at which Morgan's chief work enters: *Ancient Society* (1877), the book upon which the present work is based. What Morgan only dimly surmised in 1871 is here developed with full comprehension. Endogamy and exogamy constitute no antithesis; up to the present no exogamous "tribes" have been brought to light anywhere. But at the time when group marriage still prevailed—and in all probability it existed everywhere at one time or other—the tribe consisted of a number of groups related by blood on the mother's side, gentes, within which marriage was strictly prohibited, so that although the men of a gens could, and as a rule did, take their wives from within their tribe, they had, however, to take them from outside their gens. Thus, while the gens itself was strictly exogamous, the tribe, embracing all the gentes, was as strictly endogamous. With this, the last remnants of McLennan's artificial structure definitely collapsed.

Morgan, however, did not rest content with this. The gens of the American Indians served him further as a means of making the second

<sup>1</sup> A. Giraud-Teulon, *Les origines de la famille*, Genève, Paris 1874.—Ed.

decisive advance in the field of investigation he had entered upon. He discovered that the gens, organized according to mother right, was the original form out of which developed the later gens, organized according to father right, the gens as we find it among the civilized peoples of antiquity. The Greek and Roman gens, an enigma to all previous historians, was now explained by the Indian gens, and thus a new basis was found for the whole history of primitive society.

The rediscovery of the original mother-right gens as the stage preliminary to the father-right gens of the civilized peoples has the same significance for the history of primitive society as Darwin's theory of evolution has for biology, and Marx's theory of surplus value for political economy. It enabled Morgan to outline for the first time a history of the family, wherein at least the classical stages of development are, on the whole, provisionally established, as far as the material at present available permits. Clearly, this opens a new era in the treatment of the history of primitive society. The mother-right gens has become the pivot around which this entire science turns; since its discovery we know in which direction to conduct our researches, what to investigate and how to classify the results of our investigations. As a consequence, progress in this field is now much more rapid than before Morgan's book appeared.

Morgan's discoveries are now generally recognized, or rather appropriated, by prehistorians in England, too. But scarcely one of them will openly acknowledge that it is to Morgan that we owe this revolution in outlook. In England his book is hushed up as far as possible, and Morgan himself is dismissed with condescending praise for his *previous* work; the details of his exposition are eagerly picked on for criticism, while an obstinate silence reigns with regard to his really great discoveries. The original edition of *Ancient Society* is now out of print; in America there is no profitable market for books of this sort; in England, it would seem, the book was systematically suppressed, and the only edition of this epoch-making work still available in the book trade is—the German translation.

Whence this reserve, which it is difficult not to regard as a conspiracy of silence, particularly in view of the host of quotations given merely for politeness' sake and of other evidences of camaraderie, in which the writings of our recognized prehistorians abound? Is it perhaps because Morgan is an American, and it is very hard for English prehistorians, despite their highly commendable diligence in the collection of material, to have to depend for the general viewpoint which determines the arrangement and grouping of this mate-

rial, in short, for their ideas, upon two talented foreigners—Bachofen and Morgan? A German might be tolerated, but an American? Every Englishman waxes patriotic when faced with an American, amusing examples of which I have come across while I was in the United States. To this must be added that McLennan was, so to speak, the officially proclaimed founder and leader of the English prehistoric school; that it was, in a sense, good form among prehistorians to refer only with the greatest reverence to his artificially constructed historical theory leading from infanticide, through polyandry and marriage by abduction, to the mother-right family; that the slightest doubt cast upon the existence of mutually wholly exclusive exogamous and endogamous “tribes” was regarded as rank heresy; so that Morgan, in thus resolving all these hallowed dogmas into thin air, was guilty of a kind of sacrilege. Moreover, he resolved them in such a way that he had only to state his case for it to become obvious at once; and the McLennan worshippers, hitherto confusedly staggering about between exogamy and endogamy, were almost driven to beating their foreheads and exclaiming: How could we have been so stupid as not to have discovered all this for ourselves long ago!

And, as though this were not crime enough to prohibit the official school from treating him with anything else but cold indifference, Morgan filled the cup to overflowing not only by criticizing civilization, the society of commodity production, the basic form of our present-day society, after a fashion reminiscent of Fourier, but also by speaking of a future transformation of society in words which Karl Marx might have used. He received his deserts, therefore, when McLennan indignantly charged him with having “a profound antipathy to the historical method,” and when Professor Giraud-Teulon endorsed this view in Geneva as late as 1884. Was it not this same M. Giraud-Teulon, who, in 1874 (*Origines de la famille*) was still wandering helplessly in the maze of McLennan’s exogamy, from which it took Morgan to liberate him?

It is not necessary for me to deal here with the other advances which the history of primitive society owes to Morgan; a reference to what is needed will be found in the course of this book. During the fourteen years that have elapsed since the publication of his chief work our material relating to the history of primitive human societies has been greatly augmented. In addition to anthropologists, travellers and professional prehistorians, students of comparative law have taken the field and have contributed new material and new points of view. As a consequence, some of Morgan’s hypotheses pertaining to particular points have been shaken, or even become



untenable. But nowhere have the newly-collected data led to the supplanting of his principal conceptions by others. In its main features, the order he introduced into the study of the history of primitive society holds good to this day. We can even say that it is finding increasingly general acceptance in the same measure as his authorship of this great advance is being concealed.<sup>1</sup>

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*Frederick Engels*

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Translated from the German

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<sup>1</sup> On my return voyage from New York in September 1888 I met an ex-Congressman for Rochester who had known Lewis Morgan. Unfortunately, he could tell me little about him. Morgan, he said, had lived in Rochester as a private citizen, occupying himself only with his studies. His brother was a colonel in the army, and held a post in the War Department at Washington. Through the good offices of this brother, he had succeeded in interesting the government in his researches and in publishing a number of his works at public cost. This ex-Congressman said that he himself had also assisted in this while in Congress.—[*Note by Engels.*]

# THE ORIGIN OF THE FAMILY, PRIVATE PROPERTY AND THE STATE

## I

### PREHISTORIC STAGES OF CULTURE

Morgan was the first person with expert knowledge to attempt to introduce a definite order into the prehistory of man; unless important additional material necessitates alterations, his classification may be expected to remain in force.

Of the three main epochs, savagery, barbarism and civilization, he is naturally concerned only with the first two, and with the transition to the third. He subdivides each of these two epochs into a lower, middle and upper stage, according to the progress made in the production of the means of subsistence; for, as he says: "Upon their skill in this direction, the whole question of human supremacy on the earth depended. Mankind are the only beings who may be said to have gained an absolute control over the production of food. The great epochs of human progress have been identified, more or less directly, with the enlargement of the sources of subsistence." The evolution of the family proceeds concurrently, but does not offer such conclusive criteria for the delimitation of the periods.

#### I. SAVAGERY

1. *Lower Stage.* Infancy of the human race. Man still lived in his original habitat, tropical or subtropical forests, dwelling, at least partially, in trees; this alone explains his continued survival in face of the large beasts of prey. Fruits, nuts and roots served him as food; the formation of articulate speech was the main achievement of this period. None of the peoples that became known during the historical period were any longer in this primeval state. Although this period may have lasted for many thousands of years, we have no direct evidence of its existence; but once we admit the descent

of man from the animal kingdom, the acceptance of this transitional stage is inevitable.

2. *Middle Stage.* Begins with the utilization of fish (under which head we also include crabs, shellfish and other aquatic animals) for food and with the employment of fire. These two are complementary, since fish food becomes fully available only by the use of fire. This new food, however, made man independent of climate and locality. By following the rivers and coasts man was able, even in his savage state, to spread over the greater part of the earth's surface. The crude, unpolished stone implements of the earlier Stone Age—the so-called paleolithic—which belong wholly, or predominantly, to this period, and are scattered over all the continents, are evidence of these migrations. The newly-occupied territories as well as the unceasingly active urge for discovery, linked with their command of the art of producing fire by friction, made available new food stuffs, such as farinaceous roots and tubers, baked in hot ashes or in baking pits (ground ovens), and game, which was occasionally added to the diet after the invention of the first weapons—the club and the spear. Exclusively hunting peoples, such as figure in books, that is, peoples subsisting *solely* by hunting, have never existed, for the fruits of the chase are much too precarious to make that possible. As a consequence of the continued uncertainty with regard to sources of food stuffs, cannibalism appears to have arisen at this stage, and continued for a long time. The Australians and many Polynesians are to this day in this middle stage of savagery.

3. *Upper Stage.* Begins with the invention of the bow and arrow, whereby wild game became a regular item of food, and hunting one of the normal occupations. Bow, string and arrow constitute a very composite instrument, the invention of which presupposes long accumulated experience and sharpened mental powers, and, consequently, a simultaneous acquaintance with a host of other inventions. If we compare the peoples which, although familiar with the bow and arrow, are not yet acquainted with the art of pottery (from which point Morgan dates the transition to barbarism), we find, even at this early stage, beginnings of settlement in villages, a certain mastery of the production of means of subsistence: wooden vessels and utensils, finger weaving (without looms) with filaments of bast, baskets woven from bast or rushes, and polished (neolithic) stone implements. For the most part, also, fire and the stone axe have already provided the dugout canoe and, in places, timber and planks for housebuilding. All these advances are to be found, for example, among the Indians of Northwestern America, who, although familiar with the bow and arrow, know nothing of

pottery. The bow and arrow was for savagery what the iron sword was for barbarism and firearms for civilization, namely, the decisive weapon.

## 2. BARBARISM

1. *Lower Stage.* Dates from the introduction of pottery. This latter had its origin, demonstrably in many cases and probably everywhere, in the coating of baskets or wooden vessels with clay in order to render them fireproof; whereby it was soon discovered that moulded clay also served the purpose without the inner vessel.

Up to this point we could regard the course of evolution as being generally valid for a definite period among all peoples, irrespective of locality. With the advent of barbarism, however, we reach a stage where the difference in natural endowment of the two great continents begins to assert itself. The characteristic feature of the period of barbarism is the domestication and breeding of animals and the cultivation of plants. Now the Eastern Continent, the so-called Old World, contained almost all the animals suitable for domestication and all the cultivable cereals with one exception; while the Western, America, contained only one domesticable mammal, the llama, and this only in a part of the South; and only one cereal fit for cultivation, but that the best, maize. The effect of these different natural conditions was that from now on the population of each hemisphere went its own special way, and the landmarks on the border lines between the various stages are different in each of the two cases.

2. *Middle Stage.* Begins, in the East, with the domestication of animals; in the West, with the cultivation of edible plants by means of irrigation, and with the use of adobes (bricks dried in the sun) and stone for buildings.

We shall commence with the West, because there this stage was nowhere outgrown until the European Conquest.

At the time of their discovery the Indians in the lower stage of barbarism (to which all those found east of the Mississippi belonged) already engaged to a certain extent in the garden cultivation of maize and perhaps also of pumpkins, melons and other garden produce, which supplied a very substantial part of their food. They lived in wooden houses, in villages surrounded by stockades. The tribes of the Northwest, particularly those living in the region of the Columbia River, still remained in the upper stage of savagery and were familiar neither with pottery nor with any kind of plant cultivation. On the other hand, the so-called Pueblo Indians of New Mexico, the Mexicans, Central Americans and Peruvians were in

the middle stage of barbarism at the time of the Conquest. They lived in fort-like houses built of adobe or stone; they cultivated, in artificially irrigated gardens, maize and other edible plants, varying according to location and climate, which constituted their chief source of food, and they had even domesticated a few animals—the Mexicans the turkey and other birds, and the Peruvians the llama. They were furthermore acquainted with the working up of metals—except iron, which was the reason why they could not yet dispense with the use of stone weapons and stone implements. The Spanish Conquest cut short all further independent development.

In the East, the middle stage of barbarism commenced with the domestication of milk and meat-yielding animals, while plant cultivation appears to have remained unknown until very late in this period. The domestication and breeding of cattle and the formation of large herds seem to have been the cause of the differentiation of the Aryans and the Semites from the remaining mass of barbarians. Names of cattle are still common to the European and the Asiatic Aryans, the names of cultivable plants hardly at all.

In suitable places the formation of herds led to pastoral life; among the Semites, on the grassy plains of the Euphrates and the Tigris; among the Aryans, on those of India, of the Oxus and the Jaxartes,<sup>1</sup> of the Don and the Dnieper. The domestication of animals must have been first accomplished on the borders of such pasture lands. It thus appears to later generations that the pastoral peoples originated in areas which, far from being the cradle of mankind, were, on the contrary, almost uninhabitable for their savage forebears and even for people in the lower stage of barbarism. Conversely, once these barbarians of the middle stage had taken to pastoral life, it would never have occurred to them to leave the grassy watered plains of their own accord and return to the forest regions which had been the home of their ancestors. Even when the Aryans and Semites were driven further north and west, they found it impossible to settle in the forest regions of Western Asia and Europe until they had been enabled, by the cultivation of cereals, to feed their cattle on this less favourable soil, and particularly to pass the winter there. It is more than probable that the cultivation of cereals was introduced here primarily because of the necessity of providing fodder for cattle and only later became important for human nourishment.

The plentiful meat and milk diet among the Aryans and the Semites, and particularly the beneficial effects of these foods on the development of children, may, perhaps, explain the superior devel-

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<sup>1</sup> Oxus: Now Amu Darya; Jaxartes: now Syr Darya.—Ed.

opment of these two races. In fact, the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico, who are reduced to an almost exclusively vegetarian diet, have a smaller brain than the more meat and fish-eating Indians in the lower stage of barbarism. At any rate, cannibalism gradually disappears at this stage, and survives only as a religious rite or, what is almost identical in this instance, sorcery.

3. *Upper Stage.* Begins with the smelting of iron ore and passes into civilization through the invention of alphabetic writing and its utilization for literary records. At this stage, which, as we have already noted, was traversed independently only in the eastern hemisphere, more progress was made in production than in all the previous stages put together. To it belong the Greeks of the Heroic Age, the Italian tribes shortly before the foundation of Rome, the Germans of Tacitus and the Normans of the days of the Vikings.

Above all, we here encounter for the first time the iron ploughshare drawn by cattle, making possible land cultivation on a wide scale—tillage—and, in the conditions then prevailing, a practically unlimited increase in the means of subsistence; in connection with this we find also the clearing of forests and their transformation into arable and pasture land—which, again, would have been impossible on a wide scale without the iron axe and spade. But with this there also came a rapid increase of the population and dense populations in small areas. Prior to tillage only very exceptional circumstances could have brought together half a million people under one central leadership; in all probability this never happened.

In the poems of Homer, particularly the *Iliad*, we find the upper stage of barbarism at its zenith. Improved iron tools, the bellows, the handmill, the potter's wheel, the making of oil and wine, the working-up of metals developing into an art, wagons and war chariots, shipbuilding with planks and beams, the beginnings of architecture as an art, walled towns with towers and battlements, the Homeric epic and the entire mythology—these are the chief heritages carried over by the Greeks in their transition from barbarism to civilization. If we compare with this Cæsar's and even Tacitus' descriptions of the Germans, who were on the threshold of that stage of culture from which the Homeric Greeks were preparing to advance to a higher one, we will see how rich was the development of production in the upper stage of barbarism.

The picture of the evolution of mankind through savagery and barbarism to the beginnings of civilization that I have here sketched after Morgan is already rich enough in new and, what is more, incontestable features, incontestable because they are taken straight from production; nevertheless it will appear faint and meagre compared with the picture which will unfold itself at the end of our jour-

ney. Only then will it be possible to give a full view of the transition from barbarism to civilization and the striking contrast between the two. For the time being we can generalize Morgan's periodization as follows: Savagery—the period in which the appropriation of natural products, ready for use, predominated; the things produced by man were, in the main, instruments that facilitated this appropriation. Barbarism—the period in which knowledge of cattle breeding and land cultivation was acquired, in which methods of increasing the productivity of nature through human activity were learnt. Civilization—the period in which knowledge of the further working-up of natural products, of industry proper, and of art was acquired.

## II

### THE FAMILY

Morgan, who spent the greater part of his life among the Iroquois—who still inhabit the State of New York—and was adopted by one of their tribes (the Senecas), found a system of consanguinity prevailing among them that stood in contradiction to their actual family relationships. Marriage between single pairs, with easy dissolution by either side, which Morgan termed the "pairing family," was the rule among them. The offspring of such a married couple was known and recognized by all, and no doubt could arise as to the person to whom the designation father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister should be applied. But the actual use of these terms was to the contrary. The Iroquois calls not only his own children sons and daughters, but those of his brothers also; and they call him father. On the other hand, he calls his sisters' children his nephews and nieces; and they call him uncle. Inversely, the Iroquois woman calls her sisters' children her sons and daughters along with her own; and they call her mother. On the other hand, she addresses her brothers' children as her nephews and nieces; and she is called their aunt. In the same way, the children of brothers call one another brothers and sisters, and so do the children of sisters. Contrariwise, the children of a woman and those of her brother, call each other cousins. And these are no mere empty terms, but expressions of ideas actually in force concerning nearness and collateralness, equality and inequality of blood relationship; and these ideas serve as the foundation of a completely worked-out system of consanguinity, capable of expressing some hundreds of different relationships of a single individual. Furthermore, this system not only exists in full force among all American Indians (no excep-

tions have as yet been discovered), but also prevails almost unchanged among the aborigines of India, among the Dravidian tribes in the Deccan and the Gaura tribes in Hindustan. The terms of kinship current among the Tamils of South India and the Seneca Iroquois in the State of New York are identical even at the present day for more than two hundred different relationships. And among these tribes in India, also, as among all the American Indians, the relationships arising out of the prevailing form of the family stand in contradiction to the system of consanguinity.

How is this to be explained? In view of the decisive role which kinship plays in the social order of all peoples in the stage of savagery and barbarism, the significance of so widespread a system cannot be explained away by mere phrases. A system which is generally prevalent throughout America, which likewise exists in Asia among peoples of an entirely different race, and more or less modified forms of which abound everywhere throughout Africa and Australia, requires to be historically explained; it cannot be explained away, as McLennan, for example, attempted to do. The terms father, child, brother and sister are no mere honorific titles, but carry with them absolutely definite and very serious mutual obligations, the totality of which forms an essential part of the social constitution of these peoples. And the explanation was found. In the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii) there existed as late as the first half of the present century a form of the family which yielded just such fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, sons and daughters, uncles and aunts, nephews and nieces, as are demanded by the American and ancient Indian system of consanguinity. But strangely enough, the system of consanguinity prevalent in Hawaii again clashed with the actual form of the family existing there. There, all first cousins, without exception, are regarded as brothers and sisters and as the common children, not only of their mother and her sisters, or of their father and his brothers, but of all the brothers and sisters of their parents without distinction. Thus, if the American system of consanguinity presupposes a more primitive form of the family, no longer existing in America itself, but actually still found in Hawaii, the Hawaiian system of consanguinity, on the other hand, points to an even more aboriginal form of the family, which, although not provable as still extant anywhere, *must* nevertheless have existed, for otherwise the system of consanguinity corresponding to it could not have arisen. "The family," says Morgan, "represents an active principle. It is never stationary, but advances from a lower to a higher form as society advances from a lower to a higher condition. Systems of consanguinity, on the contrary, are passive, recording the progress made by the family at long intervals apart, and only changing radically



when the family has radically changed." "And," adds Marx, "the same applies to political, juridical, religious and philosophical systems generally." While the family continues to live, the system of consanguinity becomes ossified, and while this latter continues to exist in the customary form, the family outgrows it. However, just as Cuvier could with certainty conclude, from the pouch bones of an animal skeleton found near Paris, that this belonged to a marsupial and that now extinct marsupials had once lived there, so we, with the same certainty, can conclude, from a historically transmitted system of consanguinity, that an extinct form of the family corresponding to it had once existed.

The systems of consanguinity and forms of the family just referred to differ from those which prevail today in that each child has several fathers and mothers. According to the American system of consanguinity, to which the Hawaiian family corresponds, brother and sister cannot be the father and the mother of one and the same child; the Hawaiian system of consanguinity, on the contrary, presupposes a family in which this was the rule. We are confronted with a series of forms of the family which directly contradict the forms hitherto generally accepted as being the only ones prevailing. The traditional conception knows monogamy only, along with polygamy on the part of individual men, and even, perhaps, polyandry on the part of individual women, and hushes up the fact—as is the way with moralizing philistines—that in practice these bounds imposed by official society are silently but unblushingly transgressed. The study of the history of primitive society, on the contrary, reveals to us conditions in which men live in polygamy and their wives simultaneously in polyandry, and the common children are, therefore, regarded as being common to them all; in their turn, these conditions undergo a whole series of modifications until they are ultimately dissolved in monogamy. These modifications are of such a character that the circle of people embraced by the tie of common marriage—very wide originally—becomes narrower and narrower, until, finally, only the single couple is left, which predominates today.

In thus constructing retrospectively the history of the family, Morgan, in agreement with the majority of his colleagues, arrived at a primitive stage at which promiscuous intercourse prevailed within a tribe, so that every woman belonged equally to every man and, similarly, every man to every woman. There had been talk about such a primitive condition ever since the last century, but only in a most general way; Bachofen was the first—and this was one of his great services—to take this condition seriously and to search for traces of it in historical and religious traditions. We know today that the

traces he discovered do not at all lead back to a social stage of sexual promiscuity, but to a much later form, group marriage. That primitive social stage, if it really existed, belongs to so remote an epoch that we can scarcely expect to find *direct* evidence of its former existence in social fossils, among backward savages. It is precisely to Bachofen's credit that he placed this question in the forefront of investigation.<sup>1</sup>

It has become the fashion of late to deny the existence of this initial stage in the sexual life of mankind. The aim is to spare humanity this "shame." Apart from pointing to the absence of any direct evidence, reference is particularly made to the example of the rest of the animal world; wherefrom Letourneau (*Evolution of Marriage and Family*, 1888<sup>2</sup>) collected numerous facts purporting to show that here, too, complete sexual promiscuity belongs to a lower stage. The only conclusion I can draw from all these facts, however, is that they prove absolutely nothing as far as man and his primeval conditions of life are concerned. Mating for lengthy periods of time among vertebrate animals can be sufficiently explained on physiological grounds; for example, among birds, the need of help by the female during brooding time; the examples of faithful monogamy among birds prove nothing whatsoever for human beings, since these are not descended from birds. And if strict monogamy is to be regarded as the acme of all virtue, then the palm must be given to the tapeworm, which possesses a complete male and female sexual apparatus in every one of its 50 to 200 proglottides or segments of the body, and passes the whole of its life in cohabiting with itself in every one of these segments. If, however, we limit ourselves to mammals, we find all forms of sexual life among them: promiscuity, suggestions of group marriage, polygamy and monogamy. Only polyandry is absent. This could only be achieved by humans. Even our nearest relatives, the *quadrumanæ*, exhibit the utmost possible diversity in the grouping of male and female; and, if we want to draw the

<sup>1</sup> How little Bachofen understood what he had discovered, or rather guessed, is proved by his description of this primitive condition as *hetærisim*. This word was used by the Greeks, when they introduced it, to describe intercourse between unmarried men, or those living in monogamy, and unmarried women; it always presupposes the existence of a definite form of marriage outside of which this intercourse takes place, and includes prostitution, at least as an already existing possibility. The word was never used in any other sense and I use it in this sense with Morgan. Bachofen's highly important discoveries are everywhere incredibly mystified by his fantastic belief that the historically arisen relations between man and woman sprang from men's religious ideas of the given period and not from their actual conditions of life. [Note by Engels.]

<sup>2</sup> Ch. Letourneau, *L'Évolution du Mariage et de la Famille*. Paris 1888.—Ed.



mation; which does not exclude the possibility that, precisely for this reason, these families were later able to reconstitute themselves under infinitely more favourable circumstances." (Espinass, *op. cit.* [Ch. I], quoted by Giraud-Teulon in his *Origin of Marriage and Family*, 1884<sup>1</sup>, pp. 518-20.)

From this it becomes apparent that animal societies have, to be sure, a certain value in drawing conclusions regarding human societies—but only in a negative sense. As far as we have ascertained, the higher vertebrates know only two forms of the family: polygamy or the single pair. In both cases only *one* adult male, only *one* husband is permissible. The jealousy of the male, respecting both tie and limits of the family, brings the animal family into conflict with the horde. The horde, the higher social form, is rendered impossible here, loosened there, or dissolved altogether during the mating season; at best, its continued development is hindered by the jealousy of the male. This alone suffices to prove that the animal family and primitive human society are incompatible things; that primitive man, working his way up out of the animal stage, either knew no family whatsoever, or at the most knew a family that is nonexistent among animals. So weaponless an animal as the creature that was becoming man could survive in small numbers also in isolation, with the single pair as the highest form of gregariousness, as is ascribed by Westermarck to the gorilla and chimpanzee on the basis of hunters' reports. For evolution out of the animal stage, for the accomplishment of the greatest advance known to nature, an additional element was needed: the replacement of the individual's inadequate power of defence by the united strength and joint effort of the horde. The transition to the human stage out of conditions such as those under which the anthropoid apes live today would be absolutely inexplicable. These apes rather give the impression of being stray sidelines gradually approaching extinction, and, at any rate, in process of decline. This alone is sufficient reason for rejecting all conclusions that are based on parallels drawn between their family forms and those of primitive man. Mutual toleration among the adult males, freedom from jealousy, was, however, the first condition for the building of those large and enduring groups in the midst of which alone the transition from animal to man could be achieved. And indeed, what do we find as the oldest, most primitive form of the family, of which undeniable evidence can be found in history, and which even today can be studied here and there? Group marriage, the form in which whole groups of men

and whole groups of women belong to one another, and which leaves but little scope for jealousy. And further, we find at a later stage of development the exceptional form of polyandry, which still more militates against all feeling of jealousy, and is, therefore, unknown to animals. Since, however, the forms of group marriage known to us are accompanied by such peculiarly complicated conditions that they necessarily point to earlier, simpler forms of sexual relations and thus, in the last analysis, to a period of promiscuous intercourse corresponding to the period of transition from animality to humanity, references to the forms of marriage among animals bring us back again to the very point from which they were supposed to have led us once and for all.

What, then, does promiscuous sexual intercourse mean? That the restrictions in force at present or in earlier times did not exist. We have already witnessed the collapse of the barrier of jealousy. If anything is certain, it is that jealousy is an emotion of comparatively late development. The same applies to the conception of incest. Not only did brother and sister live as man and wife originally, but sexual relations between parents and children are permitted among many peoples to this day. Bancroft (*The Native Races of the Pacific States of North America*, 1875, vol. I<sup>1</sup>) testifies to the existence of this among the Kaviats of the Bering Strait, the Kadiaks near Alaska and the Tinnehs in the interior of British North America. Letourneau has collected reports of the same fact among the Chipewa Indians, the Cucus in Chile, the Caribbeans and the Karens of Indo-China, not to mention the accounts of the ancient Greeks and Romans concerning the Parthians, Persians, Scythians, Huns, etc. Prior to the invention of incest (and it *is* an invention, and one of the utmost value), sexual intercourse between parents and children could be no more disgusting than between other persons belonging to different generations—such as indeed occurs today even in the most philistine countries without exciting great horror; in fact, even old “maids” of over sixty, if they are rich enough, occasionally marry young men of about thirty. However, if we eliminate from the most primitive forms of the family known to us the conceptions of incest that are associated with them—conceptions totally different from our own and often in direct contradiction to them—we arrive at a form of sexual intercourse which can only be described as promiscuous—promiscuous in so far as the restrictions later established by custom did not yet exist. It by no means necessarily follows from this that a higgledy-piggledy promiscuity was in daily practice. Separate pairings for a limited

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<sup>1</sup> H. H. Bancroft, *op. cit.*, vols. I-V. New York 1875-76.—Ed.

time are by no means excluded; in fact, even in group marriage they now constitute the majority of cases. And if Westermarck, the latest to deny this original state, defines as marriage every case where the two sexes remain mated until the birth of offspring, then it may be said that this kind of marriage could very well occur under the conditions of promiscuous sexual intercourse, without in any way contradicting promiscuity, that is, the absence of barriers to sexual intercourse set up by custom. Westermarck, to be sure, starts out from the viewpoint that "promiscuity involves a suppression of individual inclinations," so that "prostitution is its most genuine form." To me it rather seems that all understanding of primitive conditions remains impossible so long as we regard them through brothel spectacles. We shall return to this point again when dealing with group marriage.

According to Morgan, there developed out of this original condition of promiscuous intercourse, probably at a very early stage:

1. The *Consanguine* family, the first stage of the family. Here the marriage groups are ranged according to generations: all the grandfathers and grandmothers within the limits of the family are all mutual husbands and wives, the same being the case with their children, the fathers and mothers, whose children will again form a third circle of common mates, their children—the great-grandchildren of the first—in turn, forming a fourth circle. Thus, in this form of the family, only ancestors and descendants, parents and children, are excluded from the rights and obligations (as we would say) of marriage with one another. Brothers and sisters, male and female cousins of the first, second and more remote degrees are all mutually brothers and sisters, and *precisely because of this* are all mutually husbands and wives. At this stage the relation of brother and sister includes the exercise of sexual intercourse with one another as a matter of course.<sup>1</sup> In its typical form, such a

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<sup>1</sup> Marx, in a letter written in the spring of 1882, expresses himself in the strongest possible terms about the utter falsification of primeval times appearing in Wagner's *Nibelung* text. "Whoever heard of a brother embracing his sister as his bride?" To these "lewd gods" of Wagner's, who, in quite modern style, spiced their love affairs with a little incest, Marx gave the answer: "In primeval times the sister *was* the wife, and *that was moral*." [Note by Engels.]

A French friend and admirer of Wagner does not agree with this note, and points out that already in the *Ögisdrœka*, the earlier *Edda*, which Wagner took as his model, Loki reproaches Freia thus: "Thine own brother hast thou embraced before the gods." Marriage between brother and sister, he claimed, was proscribed already at that time. The *Ögisdrœka* is the expression of a time when belief in the ancient myths was completely shattered; it is a truly Lucianian satire on the gods. If Loki, as Mephistopheles, thus reproaches Freia, it argues rather against Wagner. A few verses later, Loki also says

family would consist of the descendants of a pair, among whom, again, the descendants of each degree are all brothers and sisters, and, precisely for that reason, all mutual husbands and wives.

The consanguine family has become extinct. Even the rawest peoples known to history furnish no verifiable examples of this form of the family. The conclusion that it *must* have existed, however, is forced upon us by the Hawaiian system of consanguinity, still prevalent throughout Polynesia, which expresses degrees of consanguinity such as can arise only under such a form of the family; and we are forced to the same conclusion by the entire further development of the family, which postulates this form as a necessary preliminary stage.

2. The *Punaluan Family*. If the first advance in organization was the exclusion of parents and children from mutual sexual relations, the second was the exclusion of brothers and sisters. In view of the greater similarity in the ages of the participants, this step forward was infinitely more important, but also more difficult, than the first. It was accomplished gradually, commencing most probably with the exclusion of natural brothers and sisters (that is, on the maternal side) from sexual relations, at first in isolated cases, then gradually becoming the rule (in Hawaii exceptions to this rule still existed in the present century), and ending with the prohibition of marriage even between collateral brothers and sisters, or, as we would call them, between first, second and third cousins. According to Morgan it "affords a good illustration of the operation of the principle of natural selection." It is beyond question that tribes among whom inbreeding was restricted by this advance were bound to develop more rapidly and fully than those among whom intermarriage between brothers and sisters remained both rule and duty. And how powerfully the effect of this advance was felt is proved by the institution of the *gens*, which arose directly from it and shot far beyond the mark. The gens was

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to Njord: "You begat [such] a son by your sister" [*vidh systur thinni gaztu slikan mög*]. Now, Njord is not an Asa but a Vana, and says, in the Ynglinga Saga, that marriages between brothers and sisters are customary in Vanaland, which is not the case amongst the Asas. This would seem to indicate that the Vanas were older gods than the Asas. At any rate, Njord lived among the Asas as their equal, and the *Ögisdrecka* is thus rather a proof that intermarriage between brothers and sisters, at least among the gods, did not yet arouse any revulsion at the time the Norwegian Sagas of the gods originated. If one wants to excuse Wagner, one would do better to cite Goethe instead of the *Edda*, for Goethe, in his Ballad of God and the Bayadere, makes a similar mistake regarding the religious surrender of women, which he likens far too closely to modern prostitution. [Note by Engels to the fourth edition.]

the foundation of the social order of most, if not all, the barbarian peoples of the world, and in Greece and Rome we pass directly from it into civilization.

Every primeval family had to split up after a couple of generations, at the latest. The original communistic common household, which prevailed without exception until the late middle stage of barbarism, determined a certain maximum size of the family community, varying according to circumstances but fairly definite in each locality. As soon as the conception of the impropriety of sexual intercourse between the children of a common mother arose, it was bound to have an effect upon such divisions of old and the foundation of new household communities [*Hausgemeinden*] (which, however, did not necessarily coincide with the family group). One or more groups of sisters became the nucleus of one household, their natural brothers the nucleus of the other. In this or some similar way the form of the family which Morgan calls the punaluan family developed out of the consanguine family. According to the Hawaiian custom, a number of sisters, either natural or collateral (that is, first, second or more distant cousins) were the common wives of their common husbands, from which relation, however, their brothers were excluded. These husbands no longer addressed one another as brothers—which indeed they no longer had to be—but as punalua, that is, intimate companion, partner, as it were. In the same way, a group of natural or collateral brothers held in common marriage a number of women, who were *not* their sisters, and these women addressed one another as punalua. This is the classical form of family structure [*Familienformation*] which later admitted of a series of variations, and the essential characteristic feature of which was: mutual community of husbands and wives within a definite family circle, from which, however, the brothers of the wives—first the natural brothers, and later the collateral brothers also—were excluded, the same applying conversely to the sisters of the husbands.

This form of the family now furnishes us with the most complete accuracy the degrees of kinship as expressed in the American system. The children of my mother's sisters still remain her children, the children of my father's brothers being likewise his children, and all of them are my brothers and sisters; but the children of my mother's brothers are now her nephews and nieces, the children of my father's sisters are his nephews and nieces, and they all are my cousins. For while my mother's sisters' husbands still remain her husbands, and my father's brothers' wives likewise still remain his wives—by right, if not always in actual fact—the social proscription of sexual intercourse between brothers and sisters now



divided the first cousins, hitherto indiscriminately regarded as brothers and sisters, into two classes: some remain (collateral) brothers and sisters as before; the others, the children of brothers on the one hand and of sisters on the other, *can* no longer be brothers and sisters, can no longer have common parents, whether father, mother, or both, and therefore the class of nephews and nieces, male and female cousins—which would have been senseless in the previous family system—becomes necessary for the first time. The American system of consanguinity, which appears to be utterly absurd in every family form based on some kind of individual marriage, is rationally explained and naturally justified, down to its minutest details, by the punaluan family. To the extent that this system of consanguinity was prevalent, to exactly the same extent, at least, must the punaluan family, or a form similar to it, have existed.

This form of the family, proved actually to have existed in Hawaii, would probably have been demonstrable throughout Polynesia, had the pious missionaries—like the quondam Spanish monks in America—been able to perceive in these unchristian relations something more than mere “abomination.”<sup>1</sup> When Caesar tells us of the Britons, who at that time were in the middle stage of barbarism, that “by tens and by twelves they possessed their wives in common; and it was mostly brothers with brothers and parents with their children,” this is best explained as group marriage. Barbarian mothers have not ten or twelve sons old enough to be able to keep wives in common, but the American system of consanguinity, which corresponds to the punaluan family, provides many brothers, since all a man’s near and distant cousins are his brothers. The expression “parents with their children” may conceivably be a misunderstanding on Caesar’s part; this system, however, does not absolutely exclude the presence of father and son, or mother and daughter, in the same marriage group, though it does exclude the presence of father and daughter, or mother and son. In the same way, this or a similar form of group marriage provides the simplest explanation of the reports of Herodotus and other ancient writers, concerning community of wives among savage and barbarian peoples. This also applies to the description of the Tikurs of Oudh (north

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<sup>1</sup> There can no longer be any doubt that the traces of indiscriminate sexual intercourse, his so-called “*Sumpfzeugung*” [marsh breeding] which Bachofen believes he has discovered, lead back to group marriage. “If Bachofen regards these punaluan marriages as ‘lawless,’ a man of that period would likewise regard most present-day marriages between near and distant cousins on the father’s or the mother’s side as incestuous, that is, as marriages between consanguineous brothers and sisters.” (Marx.)—[Note by Engels.]

of the Ganges) given by Watson and Kaye in their book *The People of India*:<sup>1</sup> "They live together (that is, sexually) almost indiscriminately in large communities, and when two people are regarded as married, the tie is but nominal."

In by far the majority of cases the institution of the *gens* seems to have originated directly from the punaluan family. To be sure, the Australian class system also offers a starting point for it:<sup>2</sup> the Australians have gentes; but they have not yet the punaluan family; they have a cruder form of group marriage.

In all forms of the group family it is uncertain who the father of a child is, but it is certain who the mother is. Although she calls *all* the children of the aggregate family her children and is charged with the duties of a mother towards them, she, nevertheless, knows her natural children from the others. It is thus clear that, wherever group marriage exists, descent is traceable only on the *maternal* side, and thus the *female line* alone is recognized. This, in fact, is the case among all savage peoples and among those belonging to the lower stage of barbarism; and it is Bachofen's second great achievement to have been the first to discover this. He terms this exclusive recognition of lineage through the mother, and the inheritance relations that arose out of it in the course of time mother right. I retain this term for the sake of brevity. It is, however, an unhappy choice, for at this social stage, there is as yet no such thing as right in the legal sense.

Now if we take from the punaluan family one of the two typical groups—namely, that consisting of a number of natural and collateral sisters (that is, those descendent from natural sisters in the first, second or more remote degree), together with their children and their natural or collateral brothers on their mother's side (who according to our premise are *not* their husbands), we obtain exactly that circle of persons who later appear as members of a *gens*, in the original form of this institution. They have all a common ancestress, whose female descendants, generation by generation, are sisters by virtue of descent from her. These sisters' husbands, however, can no longer be their brothers, that is, cannot be descended from this ancestress, and, therefore, do not belong to the consanguineous group, the later *gens*; but their children do belong to this group, since descent on the mother's side is alone decisive, because it alone is certain. Once the proscription of sexual intercourse between all brothers and sisters, including even the most remote col-

<sup>1</sup> J. F. Watson and J. W. Kaye, *op. cit.*, vols. I-VI. London 1868-72.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> Here and below the author speaks of the large marriage groups of the Australian aborigenes.—Ed.

lateral relations on the mother's side, becomes established, the above group is transformed into a gens—that is, constitutes itself as a rigidly limited circle of blood relatives in the female line, who are not allowed to marry one another; from now on it increasingly consolidates itself by other common institutions of a social and religious character, and differentiates itself from the other gentes of the same tribe. We shall deal with this in greater detail later. If, however, we find that the gens not only necessarily, but even obviously evolved out of the punaluan family, then there is ground for assuming almost as a certainty that this form of the family existed formerly among all peoples to whom gentile institutions are traceable—that is, nearly all barbarian and civilized peoples.

At the time Morgan wrote his book our knowledge of group marriage was still very limited. A little was known about the group marriages current among the Australians, who were organized in classes, and, in addition, Morgan, as early as 1871, published the information that reached him concerning the Hawaiian punaluan family. On the one hand, the punaluan family furnished the complete explanation of the system of consanguinity prevalent among the American Indians—the system which was the starting point of all of Morgan's investigations; on the other hand, it constituted a ready point of departure for the derivation of the mother-right gens; and, finally, it represented a far higher stage of development than the Australian classes. It is, therefore, comprehensible that Morgan should conceive the punaluan family as a stage of development necessarily preceding the pairing family, and assume that it was generally prevalent in earlier times. Since then we have learned of a series of other forms of group marriage and now know that Morgan went too far in this respect. Nevertheless, in his punaluan family, he had the good fortune to come across the highest, the classical form of group marriage, the form from which the transition to a higher stage is most easily explained.

We are indebted to the English missionary Lorimer Fison for the most essential enrichment of our knowledge of group marriage, for he studied this form of the family for years in its classical home, Australia. He found the lowest stage of development among the Australian Negroes of Mount Gambier in South Australia. The whole tribe is here divided into two great classes—Kroki and Kumite. Sexual intercourse within each of these classes is strictly proscribed; on the other hand, every man of one class is the born husband of every woman of the other class, and she is his born wife. Not individuals, but entire groups are married to one another; class to class. And be it noted, no reservations at all are made here con-

cerning difference of age, or special blood relationship, other than those determined by the division into two exogamous classes. A Kroki legitimately has every Kumite woman for his wife; since, however, his own daughter by a Kumite woman is, according to mother right, also a Kumite, she is thereby the born wife of every Kroki, including her father. At all events, the class organization, as we know it, imposes no restriction here. Hence, this organization either arose at a time when, despite all dim impulses to limit inbreeding, sexual intercourse between parents and children was not yet regarded with any particular horror, in which case the class system would have arisen directly out of a condition of promiscuous sexual intercourse; or intercourse between parents and children *had already been* proscribed by custom when the classes arose, in which case the present position points back to the consanguine family, and is the first advance beyond it. The latter assumption is the more probable. Cases of marital connections between parents and children have not, as far as I am aware, been reported from Australia; and the later form of exogamy, the mother-right gens, also, as a rule, tacitly presupposes the prohibition of such converse as something already existing upon its establishment.

Apart from Mount Gambier, in South Australia, the *two-class* system is likewise to be found along the Darling River, farther East, and in Queensland, in the Northeast, thus being very widespread. This system excludes only marriage between brothers and sisters, between the children of brothers and between the children of sisters on the mother's side, because these belong to the same class; on the other hand, the children of brother and sister are permitted to marry. A further step towards the prevention of inbreeding is to be found among the Kamilaroi, along the Darling River, in New South Wales, where the two original classes are split into four, and each one of these four classes is likewise married bodily to another definite class. The first two classes are the born spouses of each other; the children become members of the third or the fourth class according to whether the mother belongs to the first or the second class; and the children of the third and fourth classes, which are likewise married to each other, belong again to the first and second classes. So that one generation always belongs to the first and second classes, the next belongs to the third and fourth, and the next again to the first and second. According to this system, the children of brothers and sisters (on the mother's side) may not become man and wife—their grandchildren, however, may. This strangely complicated system is made even more intricate by the grafting on of mother-right gentes, at any rate, later but we cannot go into this here. We see, then, how the impulse

towards the prevention of inbreeding asserts itself time and again, but in a groping, spontaneous way, without clear consciousness of purpose.

Group marriage, which in the case of Australia is still class marriage, the state of marriage of a whole class of men, often scattered over the whole breadth of the continent, with a similarly widely distributed class of women—this group marriage, when observed more closely, is not quite so horrible as is fancied by the philistine in his brothel-tainted imagination. On the contrary, long years passed before its existence was even suspected, and indeed, it has been again disputed only quite recently. To the superficial observer it appears to be a kind of loose monogamy and, in places, polygamy, accompanied by occasional infidelity. One must spend years, as Fison and Howitt did, on the task of discovering the law that regulates these conditions of marriage—which in practice rather remind the average European of his own marital customs—the law according to which an Australian Negro, even when a stranger thousands of miles away from his home, among people whose very language he does not understand, nevertheless, quite often, in roaming from camp to camp, from tribe to tribe, finds women who guilelessly, without resistance, give themselves to him; and according to which he who has several wives offers one of them to his guest for the night. Where the European can see only immorality and lawlessness, strict law actually reigns. The women belong to the stranger's marriage class, and are therefore his born wives; the same moral law which assigns one to the other, prohibits, on pain of banishment, all intercourse outside the marriage classes that belong to each other. Even where women are abducted, which is frequently the case, and in some areas the rule, the class law is scrupulously observed.

The abduction of women already reveals even here a trace of the transition to individual marriage—at least in the form of the pairing marriage: After the young man has abducted, or eloped with, the girl with the assistance of his friends, all of them have sexual intercourse with her one after the other, whereupon, however, she is regarded the wife of the young man who initiated the abduction. And, conversely, should the abducted woman run away from the man and be captured by another, she becomes the latter's wife, and the first man loses his privilege. Thus, exclusive relations, pairing for longer or shorter periods, and also polygamy, establish themselves alongside of and within the system of group marriage, which, in general, continues to exist; so that here also group marriage is gradually dying out, the only question being which will first disappear from the scene as a result of European influence—group marriage or the Australian Negroes who indulge in it.

In any case, marriage in whole classes, such as prevails in Australia, is a very low and primitive form of group marriage; whereas the punaluan family is, as far as we know, its highest stage of development. The former would seem to be the form corresponding to the social status of roving savages, while the latter presupposes relatively stable settlements of communistic communities and leads directly to the next and higher stage of development. Some intermediate stages will assuredly be found between these two; here an only just opened and barely trodden field of investigation lies before us.

3. The *Pairing Family*. A certain pairing for longer or shorter periods took place already under group marriage, or even earlier. Among his numerous wives, the man had a principal wife (one can scarcely yet call her his favourite wife) and he was her principal husband, among the others. This situation contributed in no small degree to the confusion among the missionaries, who see in group marriage, now promiscuous community of wives, now wanton adultery. Such habitual pairing, however, necessarily became more and more established as the gens developed and as the numbers of classes of "brothers" and "sisters" between which marriage was now impossible increased. The impetus given by the gens to prevent marriage between blood relatives drove things still further. Thus we find that among the Iroquois and most other Indian tribes in the lower stage of barbarism, marriage is prohibited between *all* relatives recognized by their system, and these are of several hundred kinds. This growing complexity of marriage prohibitions rendered group marriages more and more impossible; they were supplanted by the *pairing family*. At this stage one man lives with one woman, yet in such manner that polygamy and occasional infidelity remain men's privileges, even though the former is seldom practised for economic reasons; at the same time, the strictest fidelity is demanded of the woman during the period of cohabitation, adultery on her part being cruelly punished. The marriage tie can, however, be easily dissolved by either side, and the children belong solely to the mother, as previously.

In this ever widening exclusion of blood relatives from marriage, natural selection also continues to have its effect. In Morgan's words, marriage between non-consanguineous gentes "tended to create a more vigorous stock physically and mentally. When two advancing tribes are blended into one people . . . the new skull and brain would widen and lengthen to the sum of the capabilities of both." Tribes constituted according to gentes were bound, therefore, to gain the upper hand over the more backward ones, or carry them along by force of their example.

Thus, the evolution of the family in prehistoric times consisted in the continual narrowing of the circle—originally embracing the whole tribe—within which marital community between the two sexes prevailed. By the successive exclusion, first of closer, then of ever remoter relatives, and finally even of those merely related by marriage, every kind of group marriage was ultimately rendered practically impossible; and in the end there remained only the one, for the moment still loosely united, couple, the molecule, with the dissolution of which marriage itself completely ceases. This fact alone shows how little individual sex love, in the modern sense of the word, had to do with the origin of monogamy. The practice of all peoples in this stage affords still further proof of this. Whereas under previous forms of the family men were never in want of women but, on the contrary, had a surfeit of them, women now became scarce and were sought after. Consequently, with pairing marriage begins the abduction and purchase of women—widespread symptoms, but nothing more, of a much more deeply-rooted change that had set in. These symptoms, mere methods of obtaining women, McLennan, the pedantic Scot, nevertheless metamorphosed into special classes of families which he called “marriage by abduction” and “marriage by purchase.” Moreover, among the American Indians, and also among other tribes (at the same stage), the arrangement of a marriage is not the affair of the two parties to the same, who, indeed, are often not even consulted, but of their respective mothers. Two complete strangers are thus often betrothed and only learn of the conclusion of the deal when the bridegroom approaches. Prior to the marriage, presents are made by the bride to the gentile relatives of the bride (that is, to her relatives on her mother's side, not to the father and his relatives), these presents serving as purchase gifts for the ceded girl. The marriage may be dissolved at the pleasure of either of the two spouses. Nevertheless, among many tribes, for example, the Iroquois, public sentiment gradually developed against such separations. When conflicts arise, the gentile relatives of both parties intervene and attempt a reconciliation, and separation takes place only after such efforts prove fruitless, the children remaining with the mother and each party being free to marry again.

The pairing family, itself too weak and unstable to make an independent household necessary, or even desirable, did not by any means dissolve the communistic household transmitted from earlier times. But the communistic household implies the supremacy of women in the house, just as the exclusive recognition of a natural mother, because of the impossibility of determining the natural father with certainty, signifies high esteem for the women, that is

for the mothers. That woman was the slave of man at the commencement of society is one of the most absurd notions that have come down to us from the period of Enlightenment of the eighteenth century. Woman occupied not only a free but also a highly respected position among all savages and all barbarians of the lower and middle stages and partly even of the upper stage. Let Arthur Wright, missionary for many years among the Seneca Iroquois, testify what her place still was in the pairing family: "As to their family system, when occupying the old long houses [communistic households embracing several families] ... it is probable that some one clan [gens] predominated, the women taking in husbands from other clans [gentes]. . . . Usually the female portion ruled the house; the stores were in common; but woe to the luckless husband or lover who was too shiftless to do his share of the providing. No matter how many children or whatever goods he might have in the house, he might at any time be ordered to pack up his blanket and budge; and after such orders it would not be healthful for him to attempt to disobey. The house would be too hot for him; and he had to retreat to his own clan [gens]; or, as was often done, go and start a new matrimonial alliance in some other. The women were the great power among the clans [gentes], as everywhere else. They did not hesitate, when occasion required, to knock off the horns, as it was technically called, from the head of the chief and send him back to the ranks of the warriors." The communistic household, in which most of the women or even all the women belong to one and the same gens, while the men come from various other gentes, is the material foundation of that predominancy of women which generally obtained in primitive times; and Bachofen's discovery of this constitutes the third great service he has rendered. I may add, furthermore, that the reports of travellers and missionaries about women among savages and barbarians being burdened with excessive toil in no way conflict with what has been said above. The division of labour between the two sexes is determined by causes entirely different from those that determine the status of women in society. Peoples whose women have to work much harder than we would consider proper often have far more real respect for women than our Europeans have for theirs. The social status of the lady of civilization, surrounded by sham homage and estranged from all real work, is socially infinitely lower than that of the hard-working woman of barbarism, who was regarded among her people as a real lady (lady, *freya*, *Frau*=mistress [*Herrin*]) and was such by the nature of her position.

Whether or not the pairing family has totally supplanted group marriage in America today must be decided by closer investigation



among the Northwestern and particularly among the South American peoples who are still in the higher stage of savagery. So very many instances of sexual freedom are reported with regard to these latter that the complete supersession of the old group marriage can scarcely be assumed. At any rate, not all traces of it have as yet disappeared. Among at least forty North American tribes, the man who marries the eldest sister in a family is entitled to all her sisters as wives as soon as they reach the requisite age—a survival of the community of husbands for a whole group of sisters. And Bancroft relates that the tribes of the Californian peninsula (in the upper stage of savagery) have certain festivities, during which several “tribes” congregate for the purpose of indiscriminate sexual intercourse. These are manifestly gentes for whom these festivities represent dim memories of the times when the women of one gens had all the men of another for their common husbands, and *vice versa*. The same custom still prevails in Australia. Among a few peoples it happens that the older men, the chiefs and sorcerers, exploit the community of wives for their own ends and monopolize most of the women for themselves; but they, in their turn, have to allow the old common possession to be restored during certain feasts and great popular gatherings and permit their wives to enjoy themselves with the young men. Westermarck (pp. 28 and 29) adduces a whole series of examples of such periodical Saturday feasts during which the old free sexual intercourse comes into force again for a short period, as, for example, among the Hos, the Santals, the Panjas and Kotars of India, among some African peoples, etc. Curiously enough, Westermarck concludes from this that they are relics, not of group marriage, which he rejects, but—of the mating season common alike to primitive man and the other animals.

We now come to Bachofen's fourth great discovery, that of the widespread form of transition from group marriage to pairing. What Bachofen construes as a penance for infringing the ancient commandments of the gods, the penance with which the woman buys her right to chastity, is in fact nothing more than a mystical expression for the penance by means of which the woman purchases her redemption from the ancient community of husbands and acquires the right to give herself to *one* man only. This penance takes the form of limited surrender: the Babylonian women had to surrender themselves once a year in the temple of Mylitta. Other Middle Eastern peoples sent their girls for years to the Temple of Anaitis, where they had to practise free love with favourites of their own choice before they were allowed to marry. Similar customs bearing a religious guise are common to nearly all Asiatic peoples between

the Mediterranean and the Ganges. The propitiatory sacrifice for the purpose of redemption becomes gradually lighter in the course of time, as Bachofen notes: "The annually repeated offering yields place to the single performance; the hetaerism of the matrons is succeeded by that of the maidens, its practice during marriage by practice before marriage, the indiscriminate surrender to all by surrender to certain persons" (*Mother Right*,<sup>1</sup> p. xix). Among other peoples, the religious guise is absent; among some—the Thracians, Celts, etc., of antiquity, and many aboriginal inhabitants of India, the Malay peoples, South Sea Islanders and many American Indians even to this day—the girls enjoy the greatest sexual freedom until their marriage. Particularly is this the case throughout almost the whole of South America, as anybody who has penetrated a little into the interior can testify. Thus, Agassiz (*A Journey in Brazil*, Boston and New York, 1886, p. 266) relates the following about a rich family of Indian descent. When he was introduced to the daughter and enquired after her father, who, he supposed, was the mother's husband, an officer on active service in the war against Paraguay, the mother answered smilingly: "*naõ tem pai, he filha da fortuna*"—she has no father, she is the daughter of chance. "It is the way the Indian or half-breed women here always speak of their illegitimate children, unconscious of any wrong or shame. So far is this from being an unusual case that the opposite seems the exception. Children [often] know [only] about their mother, for all the care and responsibility falls upon her; but they have no knowledge of their father, nor does it seem to occur to the woman that she or her children have any claim upon him." What here appears to be so strange to the civilized man is simply the rule according to mother right and in group marriage.

Among still other peoples, the bridegroom's friends and relatives, or the wedding guests, exercise their old traditional right to the bride at the wedding itself, and the bridegroom has his turn last of all; for instance, on the Balearic Islands and among the African Augilas of antiquity, and among the Bareas of Abyssinia even now. In the case of still other peoples, again, an official person—the chief of the tribe or of the gens, the cacique, shaman, priest, prince or whatever his title—represents the community and exercises the right of first night with the bride. Despite all neore-mantic whitewashing, this *jus primæ noctis*<sup>2</sup> persists to this day as a relic of group marriage among most of the natives of the Alaska territory (Bancroft, *Native Races*, I, p. 81), among the Tahus in

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North Mexico (*ibid.*, p. 584) and among other peoples; and it existed throughout the Middle Ages at least in the originally Celtic countries, where it was directly transmitted from group marriage; for instance, in Aragon. While the peasant in Castille was never a serf, in Aragon the most ignominious serfdom prevailed until abolished by the decree issued by Ferdinand the Catholic in 1486. This public act states: "We pass judgment and declare that the aforementioned lords (señors—barons) . . . also shall not sleep the first night with the woman taken in wedlock by a peasant, nor on the wedding night, after she has gone to bed, stride over it and over the woman as a sign of their authority; nor shall the aforementioned lords avail themselves of the services of the sons or daughters of the peasant, with or without payment, against their will." (Quoted in the Catalan original by Sugenheim, *Serfdom*, Petersburg, 1861,<sup>1</sup> p. 35).

Bachofen is again absolutely right when he contends throughout that the transition from what he terms "hetaerism" or "Sumpfzeugung" to monogamy was brought about essentially by the women. The more the old traditional sexual relations lost their naïve, primitive jungle character, as a result of the development of the economic conditions of life, that is, with the undermining of the old Communism and the growing density of the population, the more degrading and oppressive must they have appeared to the women; the more fervently must they have longed for the right to chastity, to temporary or permanent marriage with one man only, as a deliverance. This advance could not have originated from the present day—dreamed of renouncing the pleasures of actual group marriage. Only after the transition to pairing marriage had been effected by the women could the men introduce strict monogamy—for the women only, of course.

The pairing family arose on the border line between savagery and barbarism, mainly at the upper stage of savagery, and here and there only at the lower stage of barbarism. It is the form of the family characteristic of barbarism, in the same way as group marriage is characteristic of savagery and monogamy of civilization. For its further development to stable monogamy, causes different from those we have hitherto found operating were required. In the pairing family, the group was already reduced to its last unit, its two-atom molecule—to one man and one woman. Natural

<sup>1</sup> S. Sugenheim, *Geschichte der Aufhebung der Leibeigenschaft und Hörigkeit in Europa bis an die Mitte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts* [History of the Abolition of Serfdom and Bond Service in Europe until the Middle of the Nineteenth Century], St. Petersburg 1861.—Ed.

selection had completed its work by constantly reducing the circle of community marriage; there was nothing more left for it to do in this direction. If no new, *social* driving forces had come into operation, there would have been no reason why a new form of the family should arise out of the pairing family. But these driving forces did commence to operate.

We now leave America, the classical soil of the pairing family. There is no evidence to enable us to conclude that a higher form of the family developed there, or that strict monogamy existed in any part of it at any time before its discovery and conquest. It was otherwise in the Old World.

Here the domestication of animals and the breeding of herds had developed a hitherto unsuspected source of wealth and created entirely new social relationships. Until the lower stage of barbarism, fixed wealth consisted almost entirely of the house, clothing, crude ornaments and the implements for procuring and preparing food: boats, weapons and household utensils of the simplest kind. Food had to be won anew day by day. Now, with herds of horses, camels, donkeys, oxen, sheep, goats and pigs, the advancing pastoral peoples—the Aryans in the Indian land of the five rivers and the Ganges area, as well as in the then much more richly watered steppes of the Oxus and the Jaxartes, and the Semites on the Euphrates and the Tigris—acquired possessions demanding merely supervision and most elementary care in order to propagate in ever-increasing numbers and to yield the richest nutriment in milk and meat. All previous means of procuring food now sank into the background. Hunting, once a necessity, now became a luxury.

But to whom did this new wealth belong? Originally, undoubtedly to the gens. But private property in herds must have developed at a very early stage. It is hard to say whether Father Abraham appeared to the author of the so-called First Book of Moses as the owner of his herds and flocks in his own right as head of a family community or by virtue of his status as actual hereditary chief of a gens. One thing, however, is certain, and that is that we must not regard him as a property owner in the modern sense of the term. Equally certain is it that on the threshold of authenticated history we find that everywhere the herds are already the separate property of the family chiefs, in exactly the same way as were the artistic products of barbarism, metal utensils, articles of luxury and, finally, human cattle—the slaves.

For now slavery also was invented. The slave was useless to the barbarian of the lower stage. It was for this reason that the American Indians treated their vanquished foes quite differently

from the way they were treated in the upper stage. The men were either killed or adopted as brothers by the tribe of the victors. The women were either taken in marriage or likewise just adopted along with their surviving children. Human labour power at this stage yielded no noticeable surplus as yet over the cost of its maintenance. With the introduction of cattle breeding, of the working-up of metals, of weaving and, finally, of field cultivation, this changed. Just as the once so easily obtainable wives had now acquired an exchange value and were bought, so it happened with labour power, especially after the herds had finally been converted into family possessions. The family did not increase as rapidly as the cattle. More people were required to tend them; the captives taken in war were useful for just this purpose, and, furthermore, they could be bred like the cattle itself.

Such riches, once they had passed into the private possession of families and there rapidly multiplied, struck a powerful blow at a society founded on pairing marriage and mother-right gens. Pairing marriage had introduced a new element into the family. By the side of the natural mother it had placed the authenticated natural father—who was probably better authenticated than many a “father” of the present day. According to the division of labour then prevailing in the family, the procuring of food and the implements necessary thereto, and therefore, also, the ownership of the latter, fell to the man; he took them with him in case of separation, just as the woman retained the household goods. Thus, according to the custom of society at that time, the man was also the owner of the new sources of food stuffs—the cattle—and later, of the new instrument of labour—the slaves. According to the custom of the same society, however, his children could not inherit from him, for the position in this respect was as follows:

According to mother right, that is, as long as descent was reckoned solely through the female line, and according to the original custom of inheritance in the gens, it was the gentile relatives that at first inherited from a deceased member of the gens. The property had to remain within the gens. At first, in view of the insignificance of the chattels in question, it may, in practice, have passed to the nearest gentile relatives—that is, to the blood relatives on the mother’s side. The children of the deceased, however, belonged not to his gens, but to that of their mother. In the beginning, they inherited from their mother, along with the rest of their mother’s blood relatives, and later, perhaps, had first claim upon her property; but they could not inherit from their father, because they did not belong to his gens, and his property had to remain in the latter. On the death of the herd owner, therefore, his herds passed, first

of all, to his brothers and sisters and to his sisters' children or to the descendants of his mothers' sisters. His own children, however, were disinherited.

Thus, as wealth increased, it, on the one hand, gave the man a more important status in the family than the woman, and, on the other hand, created a stimulus to utilize this strengthened position in order to overthrow the traditional order of inheritance in favour of his children. But this was impossible as long as descent according to mother right prevailed. This had, therefore, to be overthrown, and it was overthrown; and it was not so difficult to do this as it appears to us now. For this revolution—one of the most decisive ever experienced by mankind—need not have disturbed one single living member of a gens. All the members could remain what they were previously. The simple decision sufficed that in future the descendants of the male members should remain in the gens, but that those of the females were to be excluded from the gens and transferred to that of their father. The reckoning of descent through the female line and the right of inheritance through the mother were hereby overthrown and male lineage and right of inheritance from the father instituted. As to how and when this revolution was effected among the civilized peoples we know nothing. It falls entirely within prehistoric times. That it was actually *effected* is more than proved by the abundant traces of mother right which have been collected, especially by Bachofen. How easily it is accomplished can be seen from a whole number of Indian tribes, among whom it has only recently taken place and is still proceeding, partly under the influence of increasing wealth and changed methods of life (transplantation from the forests to the prairies), and partly under the moral influence of civilization and the missionaries. Of eight Missouri tribes, six have male and two still retain the female lineage and female inheritance line. Among the Shawnees, Miamis and Delawares it has become the custom to transfer the children to the father's gens by giving them one of the gentile names obtaining therein, in order that they may inherit from him. "Innate human casuistry to seek to change things by changing their names! And to find loopholes for breaking through tradition within tradition itself, wherever a direct interest provided a sufficient motive!" (Marx.) As a consequence, hopeless confusion arose; and matters could only be straightened out, and partly were straightened out, by the transition to father right. "This appears altogether to be the most natural transition." (Marx.) As for what the experts on comparative law have to tell us regarding the ways and means by which this transition was effected among the civilized peoples of the Old World—almost mere hypotheses, of course—see M. Kova-

levsky, *Outline of the Origin and Evolution of the Family and Property*. Stockholm 1890.<sup>1</sup>

The overthrow of mother right was the world-historic defeat of the female sex. The man seized the reins in the house also; the woman was degraded, enthralled, the slave of the man's lust, a mere instrument for breeding children. This lowered position of women, especially manifest among the Greeks of the Heroic and still more of the Classical Age, has become gradually embellished and dissembled and, in part, clothed in a milder form, but by no means abolished.

The first effect of the sole rule of the men that was now established is shown in the intermediate form of the family which now emerges, the patriarchal family. Its chief attribute is not polygamy—of which more anon—but “the organization of a number of persons, bond and free, into a family, under the paternal power of the head of the family. In the Semitic form, this family chief lives in polygamy, the bondsman has a wife and children, and the purpose of the whole organization is the care of flocks and herds over a limited area.” The essential features are the incorporation of bondsmen and the paternal power; the Roman family, accordingly, constitutes the perfected type of this form of the family. The word *familia* did not originally signify the ideal of our modern philistine, among Romans, in the beginning, it did not even refer to the married couple and their children, but to the slaves alone. *Famulus* means a household slave and *familia* signifies the totality of slaves belonging to one individual. Even in the time of Gaius the *familia, id est patrimonium* (that is, the inheritance) was bequeathed by will. The expression was invented by the Romans to describe a new social organism, the head of which had under him wife and children and a number of slaves, under Roman paternal power, with power of life and death over them all. “The term, therefore, is no older than the ironclad family system of the Latin tribes, which came in after field agriculture and after legalized servitude, as well as after the separation of the Greeks and (Aryan) Latins.” To which Marx adds: “The modern family contains in embryo not only slavery (*servitus*) but serfdom also, since from the very beginning it is connected with agricultural services. It contains within itself in miniature all the antagonisms which later develop on a wide scale within society and its state.”

Such a form of the family shows the transition of the pairing

<sup>1</sup> Maxime Kovalevsky, *Tableau des origines et de l'évolution de la famille et de la propriété*.—Ed.

family to monogamy. In order to guarantee the fidelity of the wife, that is, the paternity of the children, the woman is placed in the man's absolute power; if he kills her, he is but exercising his right.

With the patriarchal family we enter the field of written history and, therewith, a field in which the science of comparative law can render us important assistance. And in fact it has here procured us considerable progress. We are indebted to Maxim Kovalevsky (*Outline of the Origin and Evolution of the Family and Property*, Stockholm 1890, pp. 60-100) for the proof that the patriarchal household community [*Hausgenossenschaft*], such as we still find it today among the Serbs and the Bulgars under the designations of *Zadruga* (meaning something like fraternity) or *Bratstvo* (brotherhood), and among the Oriental peoples in a modified form, constituted the transition stage between the mother-right family which evolved out of group marriage and the individual family known to the modern world. This appears to be proved at least as far as the civilized peoples of the Old World, the Aryans and Semites, are concerned.

The South-Slavic *Zadruga* provides the best existing example of such a family community. It embraces several generations of the descendants of one father and their wives, who all live together in one household, till their fields in common, feed and clothe themselves from the common store and communally own all surplus products. The community is under the supreme management of the master of the house (*domàcin*), who represents it in external affairs, may dispose of smaller objects, and manages the finances, being responsible for the latter as well as for the regular conduct of business. He is elected and does not by any means need to be the eldest. The women and their work are under the direction of the mistress of the house (*domàcica*), who is usually the *domàcin's* wife. In the choice of husbands for the girls she has an important, often the decisive voice. Supreme power, however, is vested in the Family Council, the assembly of all adult members, women as well as men. To this assembly the master of the house renders his account; it makes all the important decisions, administers justice among the members, decides on purchases and sales of any importance, especially of landed property, etc.

It was only about ten years ago that the existence of such large family communities in Russia also was proved; they are now generally recognized as being just as firmly rooted in the popular customs of the Russians as the *obščina*, or village community. They figure in the most ancient Russian law code—the *Pravda* of Yaroslav—under the same name (*verv*) as in the Dalmatian Laws, and references to them may be found also in Polish and Czech historical sources.



According to Heusler (*Institutes of German Right*<sup>1</sup>) the economic unit among the Germans also was not originally the individual family in the modern sense, but the "house community" [*Hausgenossenschaft*], consisting of several generations, or individual families, and more often than not including plenty of bondsmen. The Roman family, too, has been traced back to this type, and in consequence the absolute power of the head of the house, as also the lack of rights of the remaining members of the family in relation to him, has recently been strongly questioned. Similar family communities are likewise supposed to have existed among the Celts in Ireland; in France they continued to exist in Nivernais under the name of *parçonneries* right up to the French Revolution, while in Franche Comté they are not quite extinct even today. In the district of Louhans (Saône et Loire) may be seen large peasant houses with a lofty communal central hall reaching up to the roof, surrounded by sleeping rooms, to which access is had by staircases of from six to eight steps, and in which dwell several generations of the same family.

In India, the household community with common tillage of the soil was already mentioned by Nearchus, in the time of Alexander the Great, and exists to this day in the same area, in the Punjab and the entire Northwestern part of the country. Kovalevsky himself was able to testify to its existence in the Caucasus. It still exists in Algeria among the Kabyles. It is said to have existed even in America; attempts are being made to identify it with the *calpulli*<sup>2</sup> in ancient Mexico, described by Zurita; Cunow, on the other hand, has proved fairly clearly (in *Ausland*, 1890, Nos. 42-44) that a kind of mark constitution existed in Peru (where, peculiarly enough, the mark was called *marca*) at the time of the Conquest, with periodical allotment of the cultivated land, that is, individual tillage.

At any rate, the patriarchal household community with common land ownership and common tillage now assumes quite another significance than hitherto. We can no longer doubt the important transitional role which it played among the civilized and many other peoples of the Old World between the mother-right family and the monogamian family. We shall return later on to the further conclusion drawn by Kovalevsky, namely, that it was likewise the transition stage out of which developed the village, or mark, community with individual cultivation and at first periodical, then permanent allotment of arable and pasture lands.

As regards family life within these household communities,

<sup>1</sup> A. Heusler, *Institutionen des deutschen Rechts*. Bd. I-II, Leipzig 1885-86.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> *Calpulli*: Aztec family community.—Ed.

it should be noted that in Russia, at least, the head of the house is reputed to be strongly abusing his position as far as the younger women, particularly his daughters-in-law, are concerned, and to be very often converting them into a harem; these conditions are rather eloquently reflected in the Russian folk songs.

A few words more about polygamy and polyandry before we deal with monogamy, which developed rapidly following the overthrow of mother right. Both these marriage forms can only be exceptions, historical luxury products, so to speak, unless they appeared side by side in any country, which, as is well known, is not the case. As, therefore, the men, excluded from polygamy, could not console themselves with the women left over from polyandry, the numerical strength of men and women without regard to social institutions having been fairly equal hitherto, it is evident that neither the one nor the other form of marriage could rise to general prevalence. Actually, polygamy on the part of a man was clearly a product of slavery and limited to a few exceptional cases. In the Semitic patriarchal family, only the patriarch himself and, at most, a couple of his sons lived in polygamy; the others had to be content with one wife each. It remains the same today throughout the entire Orient. Polygamy is a privilege of the rich and the grandees, the wives being recruited chiefly by the purchase of female slaves; the mass of the people live in monogamy. Just such an exception is provided by polyandry in India and Tibet, the certainly not uninteresting origin of which from group marriage requires closer investigation. In its practice, at any rate, it appears to be much more tolerable than the jealous harem establishments of the Mohammedans. At least, among the Nairs in India, the men, in groups of three, four or more, have, to be sure, one wife in common; but each of them can simultaneously have a second wife in common with three or more other men, and, in the same way, a third wife, a fourth and so on. It is a wonder that McLennan did not discover a new class—that of *club marriage*—in these marriage clubs, membership of several of which at a time was open to the men, and which he himself described. This marriage club business, however, is by no means real polyandry; on the contrary, as has been noted by Giraud-Teulon, it is a specialized form of group marriage, the men living in polygamy, the women in polyandry.

4. The *Monogamian Family*. As already indicated, this arises out of the pairing family in the transition period from the middle to the upper stage of barbarism, its final victory being one of the signs of the beginning of civilization. It is based on the supremacy of the man; its express aim is the begetting of children of undisputed paternity, this paternity being required in order that these children

may in due time inherit their father's wealth as his natural heirs. The monogamian family differs from pairing marriage in the far greater rigidity of the marriage tie, which can now no longer be dissolved at the pleasure of either party. Now, as a rule, only the man can dissolve it and cast off his wife. The right of conjugal infidelity remains his even now, sanctioned, at least, by custom (the *Code Napoléon* expressly concedes this right to the husband as long as he does not bring his concubine into the conjugal home), and is exercised more and more with the growing development of society. Should the wife recall the ancient sexual practice and desire to revive it, she is punished more severely than ever before.

We are confronted with this new form of the family in all its severity among the Greeks. While, as Marx observes, the position of the goddesses in mythology represents an earlier period, when women still occupied a freer and more respected place, in the Heroic Age we already find women degraded owing to the predominance of the man and the competition of female slaves. One may read in the *Odyssey* how Telemachus cuts his mother short and enjoins silence upon her. In Homer the young female captives become the objects of the sensual lust of the victors; the military chiefs, one after the other, according to rank, choose the most beautiful ones for themselves. The whole of the *Iliad*, as we know, revolves around the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon over such a female slave. In connection with each Homeric hero of importance mention is made of a captive maiden with whom he shares tent and bed. These maidens are taken back home, to the conjugal house, as was Cassandra by Agamemnon in Aeschylus. Sons born of these slaves receive a small share of their father's estate and are regarded as freemen. Teukros was such an illegitimate son of Telamon and was permitted to adopt his father's name. The wedded wife is expected to tolerate all this, but to maintain strict chastity and conjugal fidelity herself. True, in the Heroic Age the Greek wife is more respected than in the period of civilization; for the husband, however, she is, in reality, merely the mother of his legitimate heirs, his chief housekeeper, and the superintendent of the female slaves, whom he may make, and does make, his concubines at will. It is the existence of slavery side by side with monogamy, the existence of beautiful young slaves who belong to the *man* with all they have, that from the very beginning stamped on monogamy its specific character as monogamy *only for the woman*, but not for the man. And it retains this character to this day.

As regards the Greeks of later times, we must differentiate between the Dorians and the Ionians. The former, of whom Sparta was the classical example, had in many respects more ancient mar-

riage relationships than even Homer indicates. In Sparta we find a form of pairing marriage—modified by the state in accordance with the conceptions there prevailing—which still retains many vestiges of group marriage. Childless marriages were dissolved; King Anaxandridas (about 650 B. C.) took another wife in addition to his first, childless one and maintained two households; King Aristones of the same period added a third to two previous wives who were barren, one of whom he, however, let go. On the other hand, several brothers could have a wife in common. A person having a preference for his friend's wife could share her with him; and it was regarded as proper to place one's wife at the disposal of a lusty "stallion," as Bismarck would say, even when this person was not a citizen. A passage in Plutarch, where a Spartan woman sends a lover who is pursuing her with his attentions to interview her husband, would indicate, according to Schömann, still greater sexual freedom. Real adultery, the infidelity of the wife behind the back of her husband, was thus unheard of. On the other hand, domestic slavery was unknown in Sparta, at least in its heyday; the Helot serfs lived segregated on the estates and thus there was less temptation for the Spartiates<sup>1</sup> to have intercourse with their women. That in all these circumstances the women of Sparta enjoyed a very much more respected position than all other Greek women was quite natural. The Spartan women and the *élite* of the Athenian *hetaerae* are the only Greek women of whom the Ancients speak with respect, and whose remarks they consider as being worthy of record.

Among the Ionians—of whom Athens is characteristic—things were quite different. Girls learned only spinning, weaving and sewing, at best a little reading and writing. They were practically kept in seclusion and consorted only with other women. The women's quarter was a separate and distinct part of the house, on the upper floor, or in the rear building, not easily accessible to men, particularly strangers; to this the women retired when men visitors came. The women did not go out unless accompanied by a female slave; at home they were virtually kept under guard; Aristophanes speaks of Molossian hounds kept to frighten off adulterers, while in Asiatic towns, at least, eunuchs were maintained to keep guard over the women; they were manufactured for the trade in Chios as early as Herodotus' day, and according to Wachsmuth, not merely for the barbarians. In Euripides, the wife is described as *oikurema*, a thing for housekeeping (the word is in the neuter gender), and apart from

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<sup>1</sup> *Spartiates*: Class of citizens of ancient Sparta enjoying full civil rights, in contrast to the Helots.—Ed.

the business of bearing children, she was nothing more to the Athenian than the chief housemaid. The husband had his gymnastic exercises, his public affairs, from which the wife was excluded; in addition, he often had female slaves at his disposal and, in the heyday of Athens, extensive prostitution, which was viewed with favour by the state, to say the least. It was precisely on the basis of this prostitution that the sole outstanding Greek women developed, who by their *esprit* and artistic taste towered as much above the general level of ancient womanhood as the Spartiate women did by virtue of their character. That one had first to become a *hetaera* in order to become a woman is the strongest indictment of the Athenian family.

In the course of time, this Athenian family became the model upon which not only the rest of the Ionians, but also all the Greeks of the mainland and of the colonies increasingly moulded their domestic relationships. But despite all seclusion and surveillance the Greek women found opportunities often enough for deceiving their husbands. The latter, who would have been ashamed to evince any love for their own wives, amused themselves with *hetaerae* in all kinds of amours. But the degradation of the women recoiled on the men themselves and degraded them too, until they sank into the perversion of boy-love, degrading both themselves and their gods by the myth of Ganymede.

This was the origin of monogamy, as far as we can trace it among the most civilized and highly developed people of antiquity. It was not in any way the fruit of individual sex love, with which it had absolutely nothing in common, for the marriages remained marriages of convenience, as before. It was the first form of the family based not on natural but on economic conditions, namely, on the victory of private property over original, naturally developed, common ownership. The rule of the man in the family, the procreation of children who could only be his, destined to be the heirs of his wealth—these alone were frankly avowed by the Greeks as the exclusive aims of monogamy. For the rest, it was a burden, a duty to the gods, to the state and to their ancestors, which just had to be fulfilled. In Athens the law made not only marriage compulsory, but also the fulfilment by the man of a minimum of the so-called conjugal duties.

Thus, monogamy does not by any means make its appearance in history as the reconciliation of man and woman, still less as the highest form of such a reconciliation. On the contrary, it appears as the subjection of one sex by the other, as the proclamation of a conflict between the sexes entirely unknown hitherto in prehistoric times. In an old unpublished manuscript, the work of Marx and myself

in 1846,<sup>1</sup> I find the following: "The first division of labour is that between man and woman for child breeding." And today I can add: The first class antagonism which appears in history coincides with the development of the antagonism between man and woman in monogamian marriage, and the first class oppression with that of the female sex by the male. Monogamy was a great historical advance, but at the same time it inaugurated, along with slavery and private wealth, that epoch, lasting until today, in which every advance is likewise a relative regression, in which the well-being and development of the one group are attained by the misery and repression of the other. It is the cellular form of civilized society, in which we can already study the nature of the antagonisms and contradictions which develop fully in the latter.

The old relative freedom of sexual intercourse by no means disappeared with the victory of the pairing family, or even of monogamy. "The old conjugal system, now reduced to narrower limits by the gradual disappearance of the punaluan groups, still environed the advancing family, which it was to follow to the verge of civilization. . . . It finally disappeared in the new form of hetaerism, which still follows mankind in civilization as a dark shadow upon the family." By hetaerism Morgan means that extramarital sexual intercourse between men and unmarried women which exists *alongside of monogamy*, and, as is well known, has flourished in the most diverse forms during the whole period of civilization and is steadily developing into open prostitution. This hetaerism is directly traceable to group marriage, to the sacrificial surrender of the women, whereby they purchased their right to chastity. The surrender for money was at first a religious act, taking place in the temple of the Goddess of Love, and the money originally flowed into the coffers of the temple. The hierodules<sup>2</sup> of Anaitis in Armenia, of Aphrodite in Corinth, as well as the religious dancing girls attached to the temples in India—the so-called bayaderes (the word is a corruption of the Portuguese *bailadeira*, a female dancer)—were the first prostitutes. This sacrificial surrender, originally obligatory for all women, was later practised vicariously by these priestesses alone on behalf of all the other women. Hetaerism among other peoples grows out of the sexual freedom permitted to girls before marriage—hence likewise a survival of group marriage, only transmitted to us by another route. With the rise of property differentiation—that is, as far back as the upper stage of barbarism—wage

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<sup>1</sup> The reference is to *Die deutsche Ideologie* [*The German Ideology*]; Eng. translation: New York 1939.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> *Hierodules*: Female slave temple attendants.—*Ed.*

labour appears sporadically alongside of slave labour; and simultaneously, as its necessary correlate, the professional prostitution of free women appears side by side with the forced surrender of the female slave. Thus, the heritage bequeathed to civilization by group marriage is double-sided, just as everything engendered by civilization is double-sided, double-tongued, self-contradictory and antagonistic: on the one hand, monogamy, on the other, hetaerism, including its most extreme form, prostitution. Hetaerism is as much a social institution as any other; it is a continuation of the old sexual freedom—in favour of the men. Although, in reality, it is not only tolerated but even practised with gusto, particularly by the ruling classes, it is condemned in words. In reality, however, this condemnation by no means hits the men who indulge in it, it hits only the women: they are ostracized and cast out in order to proclaim once again the absolute domination of the male over the female sex as the fundamental law of society.

A second contradiction, however, is hereby developed within monogamy itself. By the side of the husband, whose life is embellished by hetaerism, stands the neglected wife. And it is just as impossible to have one side of a contradiction without the other as it is to retain the whole of an apple in one's hand after half has been eaten. Nevertheless, the men appear to have thought differently, until their wives taught them to know better. Two permanent social figures, previously unknown, appear on the scene along with monogamy—the wife's paramour and the cuckold. The men had gained the victory over the women, but the act of crowning the victor was magnanimously undertaken by the vanquished. Adultery—proscribed, severely penalized, but irrepressible—became an unavoidable social institution alongside of monogamy and hetaerism. The assured paternity of children was now, as before, based, at best, on moral conviction; and in order to solve the insoluble contradiction, Article 312 of the *Code Napoléon* decreed: "*L'enfant conçu pendant le mariage a pour père le mari*," "a child conceived during marriage has for its father the husband." This is the final outcome of three thousand years of monogamy.

Thus, in the monogamian family, in those cases that faithfully reflect its historical origin and that clearly bring out the sharp conflict between man and woman resulting from the exclusive domination of the male, we have a picture in miniature of the very antagonisms and contradictions in which society, split up into classes since the commencement of civilization, moves, without being able to resolve and overcome them. Naturally, I refer here only to those cases of monogamy where matrimonial life really takes its course according to the rules governing the original character of the whole

institution, but where the wife rebels against the domination of the husband. That this is not the case with all marriages no one knows better than the German philistine, who is no more capable of ruling in the home than in the state, and whose wife, therefore, with full justification, wears the breeches of which he is unworthy. But in consolation he imagines himself to be far superior to his French companion in misfortune, who, more often than he, fares far worse.

The monogamian family, however, did not by any means appear everywhere and always in the classically harsh form which it assumed among the Greeks. Among the Romans, who as future world conquerors took a longer, if less refined, view than the Greeks, woman was more free and respected. The Roman believed the conjugal fidelity of his wife to be adequately safeguarded by his power of life and death over her. Besides, the wife, just as well as the husband, could dissolve the marriage voluntarily. But the greatest advance in the development of monogamy definitely occurred with the entry of the Germans into history, because, probably owing to their poverty, monogamy does not yet appear to have completely evolved among them out of the pairing marriage. This we conclude from three circumstances mentioned by Tacitus: Firstly, despite their firm belief in the sanctity of marriage—"each man is contented with a single wife, and the women lived fenced around with chastity"—polygamy existed for men of rank and the tribal chiefs, a situation similar to that of the Americans among whom pairing marriage prevailed. Secondly, the transition from mother right to father right could only have been accomplished a short time previously, for the mother's brother—the closest male gentile relative according to mother right—was still regarded as being an almost closer relative than one's own father, which likewise corresponds to the standpoint of the American Indians, among whom Marx found the key to the understanding of our own prehistoric past, as he often used to say. And thirdly, women among the Germans were highly respected and were influential in public affairs also—which directly conflicts with the domination of the male characteristic of monogamy. Nearly all these are points on which the Germans are in accord with the Spartans, among whom, likewise, as we have already seen, pairing marriage had not completely disappeared. Thus, in this connection also, an entirely new element acquired world supremacy with the emergence of the Germans. The new monogamy which now developed out of the mingling of races on the ruins of the Roman world clothed the domination of the men in milder forms and permitted women to occupy, at least with regard to externals, a far freer and more respected position than classical antiquity had ever known. This, for the first time, created the possibility for the



greatest moral advance which we derive from and owe to monogamy—a development taking place within it, parallel with it, or in opposition to it, as the case might be, namely, modern individual sex love, previously unknown to the whole world.

This advance, however, definitely arose out of the circumstance that the Germans still lived in the pairing family, and, as far as possible, grafted the position of woman corresponding thereto on to monogamy. It by no means arose as a result of the legendary, wonderful moral purity of temperament of the Germans, which was limited to the fact that, in practice, the pairing family did not reveal the same glaring moral antagonisms as monogamy. On the contrary, the Germans, in their migrations, particularly southeast, to the nomads of the steppes on the Black Sea, suffered considerable moral degeneration and, apart from their horsemanship, acquired serious unnatural vices from them, as is attested to explicitly by Ammianus about the Taifali, and by Procopius about the Heruli.

Although monogamy was the only known form of the family out of which modern sex love could develop, it does not follow that this love developed within it exclusively, or even predominantly, as the mutual love of man and wife. The whole nature of strict monogamian marriage under male domination ruled this out. Among all historically active classes, that is, among all ruling classes, matrimony remained what it had been since pairing marriage—a matter of convenience arranged by the parents. And the first form of sex love that historically emerges as a passion, and as a passion in which any person (at least of the ruling classes) has a right to indulge, as the highest form of the sexual impulse—which is precisely its specific feature—this, its first form, the chivalrous love of the Middle Ages, was by no means conjugal love. On the contrary, in its classical form, among the Provençals, it steers under full sail towards adultery, the praises of which are sung by their poets. The "*Albas*," in German *Tagelieder* [Songs of the Dawn], are the flower of Provençal love poetry. They describe in glowing colours how the knight lies with his love—the wife of another—while the watchman stands guard outside, calling him at the first faint streaks of dawn (*alba*) so that he may escape unobserved. The parting scene then constitutes the climax. The Northern French, as well as the worthy Germans, likewise adopted this style of poetry, along with the manners of chivalrous love which corresponded to it; and on this same suggestive theme our own old Wolfram von Eschenbach has left us three exquisite Songs of the Dawn, which I prefer to his three long heroic poems.

Bourgeois marriage of our own times is of two kinds. In Catholic countries the parents, as heretofore, still provide a suitable wife

for their young bourgeois son, and the consequence is naturally the fullest unfolding of the contradiction inherent in monogamy—flourishing hetaerism on the part of the husband, and flourishing adultery on the part of the wife. The Catholic Church doubtless abolished divorce only because it was convinced that for adultery, as for death, there is no cure whatsoever. In Protestant countries, on the other hand, it is the rule that the bourgeois son is allowed to seek a wife for himself from his own class, more or less freely. Consequently, marriage can be based on a certain degree of love which, for decency's sake, is always assumed, in accordance with Protestant hypocrisy. In this case, hetaerism on the part of the man is less actively pursued, and adultery on the woman's part is not so much the rule. Since, in every kind of marriage, however, people remain what they were before they married, and since the citizens of Protestant countries are mostly philistines, this Protestant monogamy leads merely, if we take the average of the best cases, to a wedded life of leaden boredom, which is described as domestic bliss. The best mirror of these two ways of marriage is the novel; the French novel for the Catholic style, and the German novel for the Protestant. In both cases "he gets it": in the German novel the young man gets the girl; in the French, the husband gets the cuckold's horns. Which of the two is in the worse plight is not always easy to make out. For the dullness of the German novel excites the same horror in the French bourgeois as the "immorality" of the French novel excites in the German philistine, although lately, since "Berlin is becoming a metropolis," the German novel has begun to deal a little less timidly with hetaerism and adultery, long known to exist there.

In both cases, however, marriage is determined by the class position of the participants, and to that extent always remains marriage of convenience. In both cases, this marriage of convenience often enough turns into the crassest prostitution—sometimes on both sides, but much more generally on the part of the wife, who differs from the ordinary courtesan only in that she does not hire out her body, like a wageworker, on piecework, but sells it into slavery once for all. And Fourier's words hold good for all marriages of convenience: "Just as in grammar two negatives make a positive, so in the morals of marriage, two prostitutions make one virtue." Sex love in the relation of husband and wife is and can become the rule only among the oppressed classes, that is, at the present day, among the proletariat, no matter whether this relationship is officially sanctioned or not. But here all the foundations of classical monogamy are removed. Here, there is a complete absence of all property, for the safeguarding and inheritance of which monogamy and male

domination were established. Therefore, there is no stimulus whatever here to assert male domination. What is more, the means, too, are absent; bourgeois law, which protects this domination, exists only for the propertied classes and their dealings with the proletarians. It costs money, and therefore, owing to the worker's poverty, has no validity in his attitude towards his wife. Personal and social relations of quite a different sort are the decisive factors here. Moreover, since large-scale industry has transferred the woman from the house to the labour market and the factory, and makes her, often enough, the breadwinner of the family, the last remnants of male domination in the proletarian home have lost all foundation—except, perhaps, for some of that brutality towards women which became firmly rooted with the establishment of monogamy. Thus, the proletarian family is no longer monogamian in the strict sense, even in cases of the most passionate love and strictest faithfulness of the two parties, and despite all spiritual and worldly benedictions which may have been received. The two eternal adjuncts of monogamy—hetaerism and adultery—therefore, play an almost negligible role here; the woman has regained, in fact, the right of separation, and when the man and woman cannot get along they prefer to part. In short, proletarian marriage is monogamian in the etymological sense of the word, but by no means in the historical sense.

Our jurists, to be sure, hold that the progress of legislation to an increasing degree removes all cause for complaint on the part of the woman. Modern civilized systems of law are recognizing more and more, first, that, in order to be effective, marriage must be an agreement voluntarily entered into by both parties; and secondly, that during marriage, too, both parties must be on an equal footing in respect to rights and obligations. If, however, these two demands were consistently carried into effect, women would have all that they could ask for.

This typical lawyer's reasoning is exactly the same as that with which the radical republican bourgeois dismisses the proletarian. The labour contract is supposed to be voluntarily entered into by both parties. But it is taken to be voluntarily entered into as soon as the law has put both parties on an equal footing *on paper*. The power given to one party by its different class position, the pressure it exercises on the other—the real economic position of both—all this is no concern of the law. And both parties, again, are supposed to have equal rights for the duration of the labour contract, unless one or the other of the parties expressly waived them. That the concrete economic situation compels the worker to forego even the slightest semblance of equal rights—this again is something the law cannot help.

As far as marriage is concerned, even the most progressive law is fully satisfied as soon as the parties formally register their voluntary desire to get married. What happens behind the legal curtains, where real life is enacted, how this voluntary agreement is arrived at—is no concern of the law and the jurist. And yet the simplest comparison of laws should serve to show the jurist what this voluntary agreement really amounts to. In countries where the children are legally assured of an obligatory share of their parents' property and thus cannot be disinherited—in Germany, in the countries under French law, etc.—the children must obtain their parents' consent in the question of marriage. In countries under English law, where parental consent to marriage is not legally requisite, the parents have full testatory freedom over their property and can, if they so desire, cut their children off with a shilling. It is clear, therefore, that despite this, or rather just because of this, among those classes which have something to inherit, freedom to marry is not one whit greater in England and America than in France or Germany.

The position is no better with regard to the juridical equality of man and woman in marriage. The inequality of the two before the law, which is a legacy of previous social conditions, is not the cause but the effect of the economic oppression of women. In the old communistic household, which embraced numerous couples and their children, the administration of the household, entrusted to the women, was just as much a public, a socially necessary industry as the providing of food by the men. This situation changed with the patriarchal family, and even more with the monogamian individual family. The administration of the household lost its public character. It was no longer the concern of society. It became a *private service*. The wife became the first domestic servant, pushed out of participation in social production. Only modern large-scale industry again threw open to her—and only to the proletarian woman at that—the avenue to social production; but in such a way that, when she fulfils her duties in the private service of her family, she remains excluded from public production and cannot earn anything; and when she wishes to take part in public industry and earn her living independently, she is not in a position to fulfil her family duties. What applies to the woman in the factory applies to her in all the professions, right up to medicine and law. The modern individual family is based on the open or disguised domestic enslavement of the woman; and modern society is a mass composed solely of individual families as its molecules. Today, in the great majority of cases, the man has to be the earner, the breadwinner of the family, at least among the propertied classes, and this gives him a dominating position which requires no special legal privileges. In the family,

he is the bourgeois; the wife represents the proletariat. In the industrial world, however, the specific character of the economic oppression that weighs down the proletariat stands out in all its sharpness only after all the special legal privileges of the capitalist class have been set aside and the complete juridical equality of both classes is established. The democratic republic does not abolish the antagonism between the two classes; on the contrary, it provides the field on which it is fought out. And, similarly, the peculiar character of man's domination over woman in the modern family, and the necessity, as well as the manner, of establishing real social equality between the two, will be brought out into full relief only when both are completely equal before the law. It will then become evident that the first premise for the emancipation of women is the reintroduction of the entire female sex into public industry; and that this again demands that the quality possessed by the individual family of being the economic unit of society be abolished.

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We have, then, three chief forms of marriage, which, by and large, conform to the three main stages of human development. For savagery—group marriage; for barbarism—pairing marriage; for civilization—monogamy, supplemented by adultery and prostitution. In the upper stage of barbarism, between pairing marriage and monogamy, there is wedged in the dominion exercised by men over female slaves, and polygamy.

As our whole exposition has shown, the advance to be noted in this sequence is linked with the peculiar fact that while women are more and more deprived of the sexual freedom of group marriage, the men are not. Actually, for men, group marriage exists to this day. What for a woman is a crime entailing dire legal and social consequences, is regarded in the case of a man as being honourable or, at most, as a slight moral stain that one bears with pleasure. The more the old traditional hetaerism is changed in our day by capitalist commodity production and adapted to it, and the more it is transformed into unconcealed prostitution, the more demoralizing are its effects. And it demoralizes the men far more than it does the women. Among women, prostitution degrades only those unfortunates who fall into its clutches; and even these are not degraded to the degree that is generally believed. On the other hand, it degrades the character of the entire male world. Thus, in nine cases out of ten, a long engagement is practically a preparatory school for conjugal infidelity.

We are now approaching a social revolution in which the hitherto existing economic foundations of monogamy will disappear just

as certainly as will those of its supplement—prostitution. Monogamy arose out of the concentration of considerable wealth in the hands of one person—and that a man—and out of the desire to bequeath this wealth to this man's children and to no one else's. For this purpose monogamy was essential on the woman's part, but not on the man's; so that this monogamy of the woman in no way hindered the overt or covert polygamy of the man. The impending social revolution, however, by transforming at least the far greater part of permanent inheritable wealth—the means of production—into social property, will reduce all this anxiety about inheritance to a minimum. Since monogamy arose from economic causes, will it disappear when these causes disappear?

One might not unjustly answer: far from disappearing, it will only begin to be completely realized. For with the conversion of the means of production into social property, wage labour, the proletariat, also disappears, and therewith, also, the necessity for a certain—statistically calculable—number of women to surrender themselves for money. Prostitution disappears; monogamy, instead of declining, finally becomes a reality—for the men as well.

At all events, the position of the men thus undergoes considerable change. But that of the women, of *all* women, also undergoes important alteration. With the passage of the means of production into common property, the individual family ceases to be the economic unit of society. Private housekeeping is transformed into a social industry. The care and education of the children becomes a public matter. Society takes care of all children equally, irrespective of whether they are born in wedlock or not. Thus, the anxiety about the "consequences," which is today the most important social factor—both moral and economic—that hinders a girl from giving herself freely to the man she loves, disappears. Will this not be cause enough for a gradual rise of more unrestrained sexual intercourse, and along with it, a more lenient public opinion regarding virginal honour and feminine shame? And finally, have we not seen that monogamy and prostitution in the modern world, although opposites, are nevertheless inseparable opposites, poles of the same social conditions? Can prostitution disappear without dragging monogamy with it into the abyss?

Here a new factor comes into operation, a factor that, at most, existed in embryo at the time when monogamy developed, namely, individual sex love.

No such thing as individual sex love existed before the Middle Ages. That personal beauty, intimate association, similarity in inclinations, etc., aroused desire for sexual intercourse among people of opposite sexes, that men as well as women were not totally indifferent

to the question of with whom they entered into this most intimate relation is obvious. But this is still a far cry from the sex love of our day. Throughout antiquity marriages were arranged by the parents; the parties quietly acquiesced. The little conjugal love that was known to antiquity was not in any way a subjective inclination, but an objective duty; not a reason for but a correlate of marriage. In antiquity, love affairs in the modern sense occur only outside official society. The shepherds, whose joys and sorrows in love are sung by Theocritus and Moschus, or by Longus' *Daphnis and Chloë*, are mere slaves, who have no share in the state, the sphere of the free citizen. Except among the slaves, however, we find love affairs only as disintegration products of the declining ancient world; and with women who are also beyond the pale of official society, with *hetaerae*, that is, with alien or freed women: in Athens beginning with the eve of its decline, in Rome at the time of the emperors. If love affairs really occurred between free male and female citizens, it was only in the form of adultery. And sex love in our sense of the term was so immaterial to that classical love poet of antiquity, old Anacreon, that even the sex of the beloved one was a matter of complete indifference to him.

Our sex love differs materially from the simple sexual desire, the *eros*, of the ancients. First, it presupposes reciprocal love on the part of the loved one; in this respect, the woman stands on a par with the man; whereas in the ancient *eros*, the woman was by no means always consulted. Secondly, sex love attains a degree of intensity and permanency where the two parties regard non-possession or separation as a great, if not the greatest, misfortune; in order to possess each other they take great hazards, even risking life itself—what in antiquity happened, at best, only in cases of adultery. And finally, a new moral standard arises for judging sexual intercourse. The question asked is not only whether such intercourse was legitimate or illicit, but also whether it arose from mutual love or not? It goes without saying that in feudal or bourgeois practice this new standard fares no better than all the other moral standards—it is simply ignored. But it fares no worse, either. It is recognized in theory, on paper, like all the rest. And more than this cannot be expected for the present.

Where antiquity broke off with its start towards sex love, the Middle Ages began, namely, with adultery. We have already described chivalrous love, which gave rise to the Songs of the Dawn. There is still a wide gulf between this kind of love, which aimed at breaking up matrimony, and the love destined to be its foundation, a gulf never completely bridged by the age of chivalry. Even when we pass from the frivolous Latins to the virtuous Germans,

we find, in the *Nibelungenlied*, that Kriemhild—although secretly in love with Siegfried every whit as much as he is with her—nevertheless, in reply to Gunther's intimation that he has plighted her to a knight whom he does not name, answers simply: "You have no need to ask; as you command, so will I be forever. He whom you, my lord, choose for my husband, to him will I gladly plight my troth." It never even occurs to her that her love could possibly be considered in this matter. Gunther seeks the hand of Brunhild without ever having seen her, and Etzel does the same with Kriemhild. The same occurs in the *Gudrun*, where Sigebant of Ireland seeks the hand of Ute the Norwegian, Hetel of Hegelingen that of Hilde of Ireland; and lastly, Siegfried of Morland, Hartmut of Ormany and Herwig of Seeland seek the hand of Gudrun; and here for the first time it happens that Gudrun, of her own free will, decides in favour of the last named. As a rule, the bride of a young prince is selected by his parents; if these are no longer alive, he chooses her himself with the counsel of his highest vassal chiefs, whose word carries great weight in all cases. Nor can it be otherwise. For the knight, or baron, just as for the prince himself, marriage is a political act, an opportunity for the accession of power through new alliances; the interests of the *House* and not individual inclination are the decisive factor. How can love here hope to have the last word regarding marriage?

It was the same for the guildsman of the medieval towns. The very privileges which protected him—the guild charters with their special stipulations, the artificial lines of demarcation which legally separated him from other guilds, from his own fellow guildsmen and from his journeymen and apprentices—considerably restricted the circle in which he could hope to secure a suitable spouse. And the question as to who was the most suitable was definitely decided under this complicated system, not by individual inclination, but by family interest.

Up to the end of the Middle Ages, therefore, marriage, in the overwhelming majority of cases, remained what it had been from the commencement, an affair that was not decided by the two principal parties. In the beginning one came into the world married, married to a whole group of the opposite sex. A similar relation probably existed in the later forms of group marriage, only with an ever-increasing narrowing of the group. In the pairing family it is the rule that the mothers arrange their children's marriages; and here also, considerations of new ties of relationship that are to strengthen the young couple's position in the gens and tribe are the decisive factor. And when, with the predominance of private property over common property, and with the interest in inher-



itance, father right and monogamy gain the ascendancy, marriage becomes more than ever dependent on economic considerations. The *form* of marriage by purchase disappears, the transaction itself is to an ever-increasing degree carried out in such a way that not only the woman but the man also is appraised, not by his personal qualities but by his possessions. The idea that the mutual inclinations of the principal parties should be the overriding reason for matrimony had been unheard-of in the practice of the ruling classes from the very beginning. Such things took place, at best, in romance only, or—among the oppressed classes, which did not count.

This was the situation found by capitalist production when, following the era of geographical discoveries, it set out to conquer the world through world trade and manufacture. One would think that this mode of matrimony should have suited it exceedingly, and such was actually the case. And yet—the irony of world history is unfathomable—it was capitalist production that had to make the decisive breach in it. By transforming all things into commodities, it dissolved all ancient traditional relations, and for inherited customs and historical rights it substituted purchase and sale, “free” contract. And H. S. Maine, the English jurist, believed that he made a colossal discovery when he said that our entire progress in comparison with previous epochs consists in our having evolved from status to contract, from an inherited state of affairs to one voluntarily contracted—a statement which, in so far as it is correct, was contained long ago in the *Communist Manifesto*.

But the closing of contracts presupposes people who can freely dispose of their persons, actions and possessions, and who meet each other on equal terms. To create such “free” and “equal” people was precisely one of the chief tasks of capitalist production. Although in the beginning this took place only in a semiconscious manner, and in religious guise to boot, nevertheless, from the time of the Lutheran and Calvinistic Reformation it became a firm principle that a person was completely responsible for his actions only if he possessed full freedom of the will when performing them, and that it was an ethical duty to resist all compulsion to commit unethical acts. But how does this fit in with the previous practice of matrimony? According to bourgeois conceptions, matrimony was a contract, a legal affair, indeed the most important of all, since it disposed of the body and mind of two persons for life. True enough, formally the bargain was struck voluntarily; it was not done without the consent of the parties; but how this consent was obtained, and who really arranged the marriage was known only too well. But if real freedom to decide was demanded for all other contracts, why not for this one? Had not the two young people about to be

paired the right freely to dispose of themselves, their bodies and its organs? Did not sex love become the fashion as a consequence of chivalry, and was not the love of husband and wife its correct bourgeois form, as against the adulterous love of the knights? But if it was the duty of married people to love each other, was it not just as much the duty of lovers to marry each other and nobody else? And did not the right of these lovers stand higher than that of parents, relatives and other traditional marriage brokers and match-makers? If the right of free personal investigation unceremoniously forced its way into church and religion, how could it halt at the intolerable claim of the older generation to dispose of body and soul, the property, the happiness and unhappiness of the younger generation?

These questions were bound to arise in a period which loosened all the old social ties and which shook the foundations of all traditional conceptions. At one stroke the size of the world had increased nearly tenfold. Instead of only a quadrant of a hemisphere the whole globe was now open to the gaze of the West Europeans who hastened to take possession of the other seven quadrants. And the thousand-year-old barriers set up by the medieval prescribed mode of thought vanished in the same way as did the old, narrow barriers of the homeland. An infinitely wider horizon opened up both to man's outer and inner eye. Of what avail were the good intentions of respectability, the honoured guild privileges handed down through the generations, to the young man who was allured by India's riches, by the gold and silver mines of Mexico and Potosi? It was the knight-errant period of the bourgeoisie; it had its romance also, and its love dreams, but on a bourgeois basis and, in the last analysis, with bourgeois ends in view.

Thus it happened that the rising bourgeoisie, particularly in the Protestant countries, where the existing order was shaken up most of all, increasingly recognized freedom of contract for marriage also and carried it through in the manner described above. Marriage remained class marriage, but, within the confines of the class, the parties were accorded a certain degree of freedom of choice. And on paper, in moral theory as in poetic description, nothing was more unshakably established than that every marriage not based on mutual sex love and on the really free agreement of man and wife was immoral. In short, love marriage was proclaimed a human right; not only as man's right (*droit de l'homme*) but also, by way of exception, as woman's right (*droit de la femme*).

But in one respect this human right differed from all other so-called human rights. While, in practice, the latter remained limited to the ruling class, the bourgeoisie—the oppressed class, the prole-

tariat, being directly or indirectly deprived of them—the irony of history asserts itself here once again. The ruling class continues to be dominated by the familiar economic influences and, therefore, only in exceptional cases can it show really voluntary marriages; whereas, as we have seen, these are the rule among the dominated class.

Thus, full freedom in marriage can become generally operative only when the abolition of capitalist production, and of the property relations created by it, has removed all those secondary economic considerations which still exert so powerful an influence on the choice of a partner. Then, no other motive remains than mutual affection.

Since sex love is by its very nature exclusive—although this exclusiveness is fully realized today only in the woman—then marriage based on sex love is by its very nature monogamy. We have seen how right Bachofen was when he regarded the advance from group marriage to individual marriage chiefly as the work of the women; only the advance from pairing marriage to monogamy can be placed to the men's account, and, historically, this consisted essentially in a worsening of the position of women and in facilitating infidelity on the part of the men. With the disappearance of the economic considerations which compelled women to tolerate the customary infidelity of the men—the anxiety about their own livelihood and even more about the future of their children—the equality of woman thus achieved will, judging from all previous experience, result far more effectively in the men becoming really monogamous than in the women becoming polyandrous.

What will most definitely disappear from monogamy, however, is all the characteristics stamped on it in consequence of its having arisen out of property relationships. These are, first, the predominance of the man, and secondly, the indissolubility of marriage. The predominance of the man in marriage is simply a consequence of his economic predominance and will vanish with it automatically. The indissolubility of marriage is partly the result of the economic conditions under which monogamy arose, and partly a tradition from the time when the connection between these economic conditions and monogamy was not yet correctly understood and was exaggerated by religion. Today it has been breached a thousand-fold. If only marriages that are based on love are moral, then, also, only those are moral in which love continues. The duration of the urge of individual sex love differs very much according to the individual, particularly among men; and a definite cessation of affection, or its displacement by a new passionate love, makes separation a blessing for both parties as well as for society. People will only be spared the experience of wading through the useless mire of divorce proceedings.

Thus, what we can conjecture at present about the regulation of sex relationships after the impending effacement of capitalist production is, in the main, of a negative character, limited mostly to what will vanish. But what will be added? That will be settled after a new generation has grown up: a generation of men who never in all their lives have had occasion to purchase a woman's surrender either with money or with any other means of social power, and of women who have never been obliged to surrender to any man out of any consideration other than that of real love, or to refrain from giving themselves to their beloved for fear of the economic consequences. Once such people appear, they will not care a rap about what we today think they should do. They will establish their own practice and their own public opinion, conformable therewith, on the practice of each individual—and that's the end of it.

In the meantime, let us return to Morgan, from whom we have strayed quite considerably. The historical investigation of the social institutions which developed during the period of civilization lies outside the scope of his book. Consequently, he concerns himself only briefly with the fate of monogamy during this period. He, too, regards the development of the monogamian family as an advance, as an approximation to the complete equality of the sexes, without, however, considering that this goal has been reached. But, he says, "when the fact is accepted that the family has passed through four successive forms, and is now in a fifth, the question at once arises whether this form can be permanent in the future. The only answer that can be given is that it must advance as society advances, and change as society changes, even as it has done in the past. It is the creation of the social system, and will reflect its culture. As the monogamian family has improved greatly since the commencement of civilization, and very sensibly in modern times, it is at least supposable that it is capable of still further improvement until the equality of the sexes is attained. Should the monogamian family in the distant future fail to answer the requirements of society it is impossible to predict the nature of its successor."

### III

#### THE IROQUOIS GENS

We now come to a further discovery of Morgan's, which is at least as important as the reconstruction of the primitive form of the family out of the systems of consanguinity. The demonstration of the fact that the bodies of *consanguinei* within the American-Indian tribe, designated by the names of animals, are in essence identi-

cal with the *genea* of the Greeks and the *gentes* of the Romans; that the American was the original form of the gens and the Greek and Roman the later, derivative form; that the entire social organization of the Greeks and Romans of primitive times in gens, phratry and tribe finds its faithful parallel in that of the American Indians; that (as far as our present sources of information go) the gens is an institution common to all barbarians up to their entry into civilization, and even afterwards—this demonstration cleared up at one stroke the most difficult parts of the earliest Greek and Roman history. At the same time it has thrown unexpected light on the fundamental features of the social constitution of primitive times—before the introduction of the *state*. Simple as this may seem when one knows it—nevertheless, Morgan discovered it only very recently. In his previous work, published in 1871, he had not yet hit upon the secret, the discovery of which since reduced for a time the usually so confident English prehistorians to a mouse-like silence.

The Latin word *gens*, which Morgan employs as a general designation for this body of *consanguinei*, is, like its Greek equivalent, *genos*, derived from the common Aryan root *gan* (in German, where the Aryan *g* is, according to rule, replaced by *k*, it is *kan*), which means to beget. *Gens*, *genos*, the Sanscrit *janas*, the Gothic *kuni* (in accordance with the above-mentioned rule), the ancient Nordic and Anglo-Saxon *kyn*, the English *kin*, the Middle High German *künne*, all equally signify kinship, descent. However, *gens* in the Latin and *genos* in the Greek are specially used for those bodies of *consanguinei* which boast a common descent (in this case from a common male ancestor) and which, through certain social and religious institutions, are linked together into a special community, whose origin and nature had hitherto, nevertheless, remained obscure to all our historians.

We have already seen above, in connection with the punaluan family, how a gens in its original form is constituted. It consists of all persons who, by virtue of punaluan marriage and in accordance with the conceptions necessarily predominating therein, constitute the recognized descendants of a definite individual ancestress, the founder of the gens. Since paternity is uncertain in this form of the family, female lineage alone is valid. Since the brothers may not marry their sisters, but only women of different descent, the children born of such women fall, according to mother right, outside the gens. Thus, only the offspring of the *daughters* of each generation remain in the kinship group, while the offspring of the sons go over into the *gentes* of their mothers. What, then, becomes of this consanguine group once it constitutes itself as a separate group, as against similar groups within the tribe?

Morgan takes the gens of the Iroquois, particularly that of the Seneca tribe, as the classical form of the original gens. They have eight gentes, named after the following animals: 1) Wolf; 2) Bear; 3) Turtle; 4) Beaver; 5) Deer; 6) Snipe; 7) Heron; 8) Hawk. The following usages prevail in each gens:

1. It elects its sachem (headman in times of peace) and its chief (leader in war). The sachem had to be elected from within the gens itself and his office was hereditary in the gens, in the sense that it had to be immediately filled whenever a vacancy occurred. The war chief could be elected also outside the gens and the office could at times remain vacant. The son of the previous sachem never succeeded to the office, since mother right prevailed among the Iroquois, and the son, therefore, belonged to a different gens. The brother or the sister's son, however, was often elected. All voted at the election—both men and women. The choice, however, had to be confirmed by the remaining seven gentes and only then was the elected person ceremonially installed, this being carried out by the general council of the entire Iroquois Confederacy. The significance of this will be seen later. The sachem's authority within the gens was of a paternal and purely moral character. He had no means of coercion at his command. He was by virtue of his office a member also of the tribal council of the Senecas, as well as of the Council of the Confederacy of all the Iroquois. The war chief could give orders only in military expeditions.

2. The gens can depose the sachem and war chief at will. This again is carried through jointly by the men and women. Thereafter, the deposed rank as simple warriors and private persons like the rest. The council of the tribe can also depose the sachems, even against the wishes of the gens.

3. No member is permitted to marry within the gens. This is the fundamental rule of the gens, the bond which keeps it together; it is the negative expression of the very positive blood relationship by virtue of which the individuals associated in it really become a gens. By the discovery of this simple fact Morgan, for the first time, revealed the nature of the gens. How little the gens had been understood until then is proved by the earlier reports concerning savages and barbarians, in which the various bodies constituting the gentile organization are ignorantly and indiscriminately referred to as tribe, clan, thum, etc.; and regarding these it is sometimes asserted that marriage within any such body is prohibited. This gave rise to the hopeless confusion in which Mr. McLennan could intervene as a Napoleon, creating order by his fiat: All tribes are divided into those within which marriage is forbidden (exogamous) and those within which it is permitted (endogamous). And after having thus

thoroughly muddled matters he could indulge in most profound investigations as to which of his two absurd classes was the older, exogamy or endogamy. This nonsense ceased automatically with the discovery of the gens based on blood relationship and the consequent impossibility of marriage between its members. Obviously, at the stage at which we find the Iroquois, the rule forbidding marriage within the gens is inflexibly adhered to.

4. The property of deceased persons was distributed among the remaining members of the gens—it had to remain in the gens. In view of the insignificance of the effects which an Iroquois could leave, the heritage was divided among the nearest relatives in the gens; when a man died, among his natural brothers and sisters and his maternal uncle; when a woman died, then among her children and natural sisters, but not her brothers. That is precisely the reason why it was impossible for man and wife to inherit from each other, and why children could not inherit from their father.

5. The members of the gens were bound to give one another assistance, protection and particularly support in avenging injuries inflicted by outsiders. The individual depended and could depend for his security on the protection of the gens. Whoever injured him injured the whole gens. From this—the blood ties of the gens—arose the obligation of blood revenge, which was unconditionally recognized by the Iroquois. If a nonmember of a gens slew a member of the gens the whole gens to which the slain person belonged was pledged to blood revenge. First mediation was tried. A council of the slayer's gens was held and propositions were made to the council of the victim's gens for a composition of the matter—mostly in the form of expressions of regret and presents of considerable value. If these were accepted, the affair was settled. If not, the injured gens appointed one or more avengers, whose duty it was to pursue and slay the murderer. If this was accomplished the gens of the latter had no right to complain; the matter was regarded as adjusted.

6. The gens has definite names or series of names which it alone, in the whole tribe, is entitled to use, so that an individual's name also indicates the gens to which he belongs. A gentile name carries gentile rights with it as a matter of course.

7. The gens can adopt strangers and thereby admit them into the tribe as a whole. Prisoners of war that were not slain became members of the Seneca tribe by adoption into a gens and thereby obtained the full tribal and gentile rights. The adoption took place at the request of individual members of the gens—men placed the stranger in the relation of a brother or sister, women in that of a

child. For confirmation, ceremonial acceptance into the gens was necessary. Gentes exceptionally shrunk in numbers were often replenished by mass adoption from another gens, with the latter's consent. Among the Iroquois, the ceremony of adoption into the gens was performed at a public meeting of the council of the tribe, which turned it practically into a religious ceremony.

8. It would be difficult to prove special religious rites among the Indian gentes—and yet the religious ceremonies of the Indians are more or less connected with the gentes. Among the Iroquois, at their six annual religious ceremonies, the sachems and war chiefs of the individual gentes were reckoned among the “Keepers of the Faith” *ex officio* and exercised priestly functions.

9. The gens has a common burial place. That of the Iroquois of New York State, who have been hemmed in by the whites, has now disappeared, but it formerly existed. It still survives amongst other Indian tribes, as, for instance, amongst the Tuscaroras, a tribe closely related to the Iroquois, who, although Christian, still retain in their cemetery a special row for each gens, so that the mother is buried in the same row as her children, but not the father. And among the Iroquois also, all the members of the gens are mourners at the funeral, prepare the grave, deliver funeral orations and so forth.

10. The gens has a council, the democratic assembly of all adult male and female members of the gens, all with equal voice. This council elected and deposed the sachems and war chiefs and, likewise, the remaining “Keepers of the Faith.” It decided about penance gifts (*wergild*) or blood revenge, for murdered gentiles. It adopted strangers into the gens. In short, it was the sovereign power in the gens.

These are the powers of a typical Indian gens. “All the members of an Iroquois gens were personally free, and they were bound to defend each other's freedom; they were equal in privileges and in personal rights, the sachem and chiefs claiming no superiority; and they were a brotherhood bound together by the ties of kin. Liberty, equality, and fraternity, though never formulated, were cardinal principles of the gens. The gens was the unit of a social system, the foundation upon which Indian society was organized. [This] serves to explain that sense of independence and personal dignity universally an attribute of Indian character.”

At the time of their discovery the Indians in all North America were organized in gentes in accordance with mother right. Only in a few tribes, as amongst the Dakotas, the gentes had fallen into decay, while in some others, such as the Ojibwas and Omahas, they were organized in accordance with father right.



Among numerous Indian tribes having more than five or six gentes, we find three, four or more gentes united in a special group which Morgan—faithfully translating the Indian term by its Greek counterpart—calls the phratry (brotherhood). Thus, the Senecas have two phratries, the first embracing the gentes 1 to 4, and the second the gentes 5 to 8. Closer investigation shows that these phratries, in the main, represent those original gentes into which the tribe split at the outset; for with the prohibition of marriage within the gens, each tribe had necessarily to consist of at least two gentes in order to be capable of independent existence. As the tribe increased, each gens again subdivided into two or more gentes, each of which now appears as a separate gens, while the original gens, which embraces all the daughter gentes, lives on as the phratry. Among the Senecas and most other Indian tribes, the gentes in one phratry are brother gentes, while those in others are their cousin gentes—designations which, as we have seen, have a very real and expressive significance in the American system of consanguinity. Originally, indeed, no Seneca could marry within his phratry; but this prohibition has long since lapsed and is limited only to the gens. The Senecas had a tradition that the Bear and the Deer were the two original gentes, of which the others were offshoots. Once this new institution had become firmly rooted, it was modified according to need. In order to maintain equilibrium, whole gentes out of other phratries were occasionally transferred to those in which gentes had died out. This explains why we find gentes of the same name variously grouped among the phratries in different tribes.

Among the Iroquois the functions of the phratry are partly social and partly religious. 1) The ball game is played by phratries, one against the other; each phratry puts forward its best players, the remaining members of the phratry being spectators arranged according to phratry, who bet against each other on the success of their respective sides. 2) At the council of the tribe the sachems and war chiefs of each phratry sit together, the two groups facing each other, and each speaker addresses the representatives of each phratry as a separate body. 3) If a murder was committed in the tribe and the victim and the slayer did not belong to the same phratry, the aggrieved gens often appealed to its brother gentes; these held a phratry council and addressed themselves to the other phratry, as a body, asking it also to summon a council for the adjustment of the matter. Here again the phratry appears as the original gens and with greater prospects of success than the weaker individual gens, its offspring. 4) On the death of persons of consequence, the opposite phratry undertook the arrangement of the funeral and the burial rites, while the phratry of the deceased

went along as mourners. If a sachem died, the opposite phratry notified the federal council of the Iroquois of the vacancy in the office. 5) The council of the phratry again appeared on the scene at the election of a sachem. Confirmation by the brother gentes was regarded as rather a matter of course, but the gentes of the other phratry might be opposed. In such a case the council of this phratry met and, if it upheld the opposition, the election was null and void. 6) Formerly, the Iroquois had special religious mysteries, which white men called "medicine lodges." Among the Senecas these were celebrated by two religious fraternities, one for each phratry, with a regular initiation ritual for new members. 7) If, as is almost certain, the four lineages (kinship groups) that occupied the four quarters of Tlascalá at the time of the Conquest were four phratries, this proves that the phratries, as among the Greeks, and similar bodies of *consanguinei* among the Germans, served also as military units. These four lineages went into battle, each one as a separate host, with its own uniform and flag, and a leader of its own.

Just as several gentes constitute a phratry, so, in the classical form, several phratries constitute a tribe. In many cases the middle link, the phratry, is missing among greatly weakened tribes. What are the distinctive features of the Indian tribe in America?

1. The possession of its own territory and its own name. In addition to the area of actual settlement, each tribe possessed considerable territory for hunting and fishing. Beyond this there was a wide stretch of neutral land reaching to the territory of the next tribe; the extent of this neutral territory was relatively small where the languages of the two tribes were related, and large where not. Such neutral ground was the border forest of the Germans, the wasteland which Caesar's Suevi created around their territory, the *îsarnholt* (Danish *jarnved*, *limes Danicus*) between the Danes and the Germans, the Saxon forest and the *branibor* (defence forest in Slavic)—from which Brandenburg derives its name—between Germans and Slavs. The territory thus marked out by imperfectly defined boundaries was the common land of the tribe, recognized as such by neighbouring tribes, and defended by the tribe against any encroachment. In most cases, the uncertainty of the boundaries became a practical inconvenience only when the population had greatly increased. The tribal names appear to have been the result more of accident than of deliberate choice. As time passed it frequently happened that neighbouring tribes designated a tribe by a name different from that which it itself used, like the case of the Germans [*die Deutschen*], whose first comprehensive historical name—*Germani* [*Germanen*—was bestowed on them by the Celts.

2. A special *dialect* peculiar to this tribe only. In fact, tribe and dialect are substantially coextensive. The establishment of new tribes and dialects through subdivision was in progress in America until quite recently, and can hardly have ceased altogether even now. Where two weakened tribes have amalgamated into one, it happens, by way of exception, that two closely related dialects are spoken in the same tribe. The average strength of American tribes is under 2,000. The Cherokees, however, are nearly 26,000 strong—being the largest number of Indians in the United States that speak the same dialect.

3. The right of investing the sachems and war chiefs elected by the gentes, and

4. The right to depose them again, even against the wishes of their gens. As these sachems and war chiefs are members of the tribal council, these rights of the tribe in relation to them are self-explanatory. Wherever a confederacy of tribes was established and all the tribes were represented in a federal council, the above rights were transferred to this latter body.

5. The possession of common religious ideas (mythology) and rites of worship. "After the fashion of barbarians the American Indians were a religious people." Their mythology has not yet been critically investigated by any means. They already personified their religious ideas—spirits of all kinds—but in the lower stage of barbarism in which they lived there was as yet no plastic representation, no so-called idols. It is a nature and element worship evolving towards polytheism. The various tribes had their regular festivals with definite forms of worship, particularly dancing and games. Dancing especially was an essential part of all religious ceremonies, each tribe performing its own separately.

6. A tribal council for common affairs. It consisted of all the sachems and war chiefs of the individual gentes—the real representatives of the latter, because they could always be deposed. The council sat in public, surrounded by the other members of the tribe, who had the right to join in the discussion and to secure a hearing for their opinions, and the council made the decision. As a rule it was open to everyone present to address the council; even the women could express their views through a spokesman of their own choice. Among the Iroquois the final decisions had to be adopted unanimously, as was also the case with many of the decisions of the German mark communities. In particular, the regulation of relations with other tribes devolved upon the tribal council. It received and sent embassies, it declared war and concluded peace. When war broke out it was carried on mainly by volunteers. In principle each tribe was in a state of war with every other tribe

with which it had not expressly concluded a treaty of peace. Military expeditions against such enemies were for the most part organized by a few outstanding warriors. They gave a war dance; whoever joined in the dance thereby declared his intention to participate in the expedition. A detachment was immediately formed and it set out forthwith. When the tribal territory was attacked, its defence was in the same manner conducted mainly by volunteers. The departure and return of such detachments were always made the occasion for public festivities. The sanction of the tribal council for such expeditions was not necessary. It was neither sought nor given. They were exactly like the private war expeditions of the German retainers, as Tacitus has described them, except that among the Germans the body of retainers had already assumed a more permanent character, and constituted a strong nucleus, organized in times of peace, around which the remaining volunteers grouped themselves in the event of war. Such military detachments were seldom numerically strong. The most important expeditions of the Indians, even those covering great distances, were carried through by insignificant fighting forces. When several such retinues gathered for an important engagement, each group obeyed its own leader only. The unity of the plan of campaign was ensured, more or less, by a council of these leaders. It was the method of war adopted by the Alamanni of the Upper Rhine in the fourth century, as described by Ammianus Marcellinus.

7. In some tribes we find a head-chief [*Oberhäuptling*], whose powers, however, are very slight. He is one of the sachems, who in cases demanding speedy action has to take provisional measures until such time as the council can assemble and make the final decision. This is a feeble but, as further development showed, generally fruitless inchoate attempt to create an official with executive authority; actually, as will be seen, it was the highest military commander [*oberster Heerführer*] who, in most cases, if not in all, developed into such an official.

The great majority of American Indians never got beyond the stage of tribal integration. Constituting numerically small tribes, separated from one another by wide borderlands, and enfeebled by perpetual warfare, they occupied an enormous territory with but few people. Alliances arising out of temporary emergencies were concluded here and there between kindred tribes and dissolved again with the passing of the emergency. But in certain areas originally kindred but subsequently disunited tribes reunited in lasting confederacies, and so took the first step towards the formation of nations. In the United States we find the most advanced form of such a confederacy among the Iroquois. Emigrating from their

original home west of the Mississippi, where they probably constituted a branch of the great Dakota family, they settled down after protracted wanderings in what is today the state of New York. They were divided into five tribes: Senecas, Cayugas, Onondagas, Oneidas and Mohawks. Subsisting on fish, game and the produce of a crude horticulture, they lived in villages protected mostly by palisades. Never more than 20,000 strong, they had a number of gentes common to all the five tribes; they spoke closely-related dialects of the same language and occupied a continuous tract of territory that was divided among the five tribes. Since this area had been newly conquered, habitual cooperation among these tribes against those they displaced was only natural. At the beginning of the fifteenth century at the latest, this developed into a regular "permanent league," a confederacy, which, conscious of its new found strength, immediately assumed an aggressive character and at the height of its power—about 1675—had conquered large stretches of the surrounding country, expelling some of the inhabitants and forcing others to pay tribute. The Iroquois Confederacy was the most advanced social organization attained by the Indians who had not emerged from the lower stage of barbarism (that is, excepting the Mexicans, New Mexicans and Peruvians). The fundamental features of the Confederacy were as follows:

1. Perpetual alliance of the five consanguine tribes on the basis of complete equality and independence in all internal tribal affairs. This blood relationship constituted the true basis of the Confederacy. Of the five tribes, three were called the father tribes and were brothers one to another; the other two were called son tribes and were likewise brother tribes to each other. Three gentes—the oldest—still had living representatives in all the five tribes, while another three had in three tribes. The members of each of these gentes were all brothers throughout the five tribes. The common language, with mere dialectal differences, was the expression and the proof of common descent.

2. The organ of the Confederacy was a Federal Council comprised of fifty sachems, all of equal rank and dignity; this Council passed finally on all matters pertaining to the Confederacy.

3. At the time the Confederacy was constituted these fifty sachems were distributed among the tribes and gentes as the bearers of new offices, especially created to suit the aims of the Confederacy. They were elected anew by the gentes concerned whenever a vacancy arose, and could always be removed by them. The right to invest them with office belonged, however, to the Federal Council.

4. These federal sachems were also sachems in their own respective tribes, and each had a seat and a vote in the tribal council.

5. All decisions of the Federal Council had to be unanimous.
6. Voting was by tribes, so that each tribe and all the council members in each tribe had to agree before a binding decision could be made.
7. Each of the five tribal councils could convene the Federal Council, but the latter had no power to convene itself.
8. Its meetings took place before the assembled people. Every Iroquois had the right to speak; the council alone decided.
9. The Confederacy had no official head, no chief executive.
10. It did, however, have two supreme war chiefs, enjoying equal authority and equal power (the two "kings" of the Spartans, the two consuls in Rome).

This was the whole social constitution under which the Iroquois lived for over four hundred years, and still do live. I have given Morgan's account of it in some detail because it gives us the opportunity of studying the organization of a society which as yet knows no *state*. The state presupposes a special public authority separated from the totality of those concerned in each case; and Maurer with true instinct recognizes the German mark constitution as *per se* a purely social institution differing essentially from the state, although it largely served as its foundation later on. In all his writings, therefore, Maurer investigates the gradual rise of public authority out of and side by side with the original constitutions of the marks, villages, manors and towns. The North American Indians show how an originally united tribe gradually spread over an immense continent; how tribes, through fission, became peoples, whole groups of tribes; how the languages changed not only until they became mutually unintelligible, but until nearly every trace of original unity disappeared; and how at the same time individual gentes within the tribes broke up into several; how the old mother gentes persisted as phratries, and the names of these oldest gentes still remain the same among widely remote and long-separated tribes—the Wolf and the Bear are still gentile names among a majority of Indian tribes. Generally speaking, the constitution described above applies to them all—except that many of them did not get as far as a confederation of kindred tribes.

But we also see that once the gens as a social unit was given, the entire system of gentes, phratries and tribe developed with almost compelling necessity—because naturally—out of this unit. All three are groups of various degrees of consanguinity, each complete in itself and managing its own affairs, but each also supplementing the rest. And the sphere of affairs devolving on them comprised the totality of the public affairs of the barbarians in the lower stage. Wherever, therefore, we discover the gens as the social unit of a

people, we may look for an organization of the tribe similar to that described above; and where sufficient sources are available, as, for example, amongst the Greeks and the Romans, we shall not only find them, but we shall also convince ourselves that, where the sources fail us, a comparison with the American social constitution will help us out of the most difficult doubts and enigmas.

And this gentile constitution is wonderful in all its childlike simplicity! Everything runs smoothly without soldiers, gendarmes or police; without nobles, kings, governors, prefects or judges; without prisons; without trials. All quarrels and disputes are settled by the whole body of those concerned—the gens or the tribe or the individual gentes among themselves. Blood revenge threatens only as an extreme or rarely applied measure, of which our capital punishment is only the civilized form, possessed of all the advantages and drawbacks of civilization. Although there are many more affairs in common than at present—the household is run in common and communistically by a number of families, the land is tribal property, only the small gardens being temporarily assigned to the households—still, not a bit of our extensive and complicated machinery of administration is required. Those concerned decide, and in most cases century-old custom has already regulated everything. There can be no poor and needy—the communistic household and the gens know their obligations towards the aged, the sick and those disabled in war. All are free and equal—including the women. There is as yet no room for slaves, nor, as a rule, for the subjugation of alien tribes. When the Iroquois conquered the Eries and the “Neutral Nations” about the year 1651, they invited them to join the Confederacy as equal members; only when the vanquished refused were they driven out of their territory. And the kind of men and women that are produced by such a society is indicated by the admiration felt by all white men who came into contact with uncorrupted Indians, admiration of the personal dignity, straightforwardness, strength of character and bravery of these barbarians.

We have witnessed quite recently examples of this bravery in Africa. The Zulu Kaffirs a few years ago, like the Nubians a couple of months ago<sup>1</sup>—in both of which tribes gentile institutions have not yet died out—did what no European army can do. Armed only with pikes and spears and without firearms, they advanced, under a hail of bullets from the breech loaders, right up to the bayonets of the English infantry—acknowledged as the best in the world for fighting in close formation—throwing them into disorder and even beating them back more than once; and this, despite the colos-

<sup>1</sup> The reference is to the war between the British and the Zulus in 1879 and between the British and the Nubians in 1883.—*Ed.*

sal disparity in arms and despite the fact that they have no such thing as military service, and do not know what military exercises are. Their capacity and endurance are best proved by the complaint of the English that a Kaffir can move faster and cover a longer distance in twenty-four hours than a horse. As an English painter says, their smallest muscle stands out, hard and steely, like whipcord.

This is what mankind and human society were like before class divisions arose. And if we compare their condition with that of the overwhelming majority of civilized people today, we will find an enormous gulf between the present-day proletarian and small peasant and the ancient free member of a gens.

This is one side of the picture. Let us not forget, however, that this organization was doomed to extinction. It never developed beyond the tribe; the confederacy of tribes already signified the commencement of its downfall, as we shall see later, and as the attempts of the Iroquois to subjugate others have shown. What was outside the tribe was outside the law. Where no express treaty of peace existed, war raged between tribe and tribe; and war was waged with the cruelty that distinguishes man from all other animals and which was abated only later in self-interest. The gentile constitution in full bloom, as we have seen it in America, presupposed an extremely undeveloped form of production, that is, an extremely sparse population spread over a wide territory, and therefore the almost complete domination of man by external nature, alien, opposed, incomprehensible to him, a domination reflected in his childish religious ideas. The tribe remained the boundary for man, in relation to himself as well as to outsiders: the tribe, the gens and their institutions were sacred and inviolable, a superior power, instituted by nature, to which the individual remained absolutely subject in feeling, thought and deed. Impressive as the people of this epoch may appear to us, they differ in no way one from another, they are still bound, as Marx says, to the umbilical cord of the primordial community. The power of these primordial communities had to be broken, and it was broken. But it was broken by influences which from the outset appear to us as a degradation, a fall from the simple moral grandeur of the ancient gentile society. The lowest interests—base greed, brutal sensuality, sordid avarice, selfish plunder of common possessions—usher in the new, civilized society, class society; the most outrageous means—theft, rape, deceit and treachery—undermine and topple the old, classless, gentile society. And the new society, during all the 2,500 years of its existence, has never been anything but the development of the small minority at the expense of the exploited and oppressed great majority; and it is so today more than ever before.



## IV

## THE GRECIAN GENS

Greeks as well as Pelasgians and other peoples of the same tribal origin were constituted since prehistoric times in the same organic series as the Americans: gens, phratry, tribe, confederacy of tribes. The phratry might be missing, as, for example, among the Dorians; the confederacy of tribes might not be fully developed yet in every case; but the gens was everywhere the unit. At the time the Greeks entered into history, they were on the threshold of civilization. Almost two entire great periods of development lie between the Greeks and the above-mentioned American tribes, the Greeks of the Heroic Age being by so much ahead of the Iroquois. For this reason the Grecian gens no longer bore the archaic character of the Iroquois gens; the stamp of group marriage was becoming considerably blurred. Mother right had given way to father right; thereby rising private wealth made the first breach in the gentile constitution. A second breach naturally followed the first: after the introduction of father right, the fortune of a wealthy heiress would, by virtue of her marriage, fall to her husband, that is to say, to another gens; and so the foundation of all gentile law was broken, and in such cases the girl was not only permitted, but *obliged* to marry within the gens, in order that the latter might retain the fortune.

According to Grote's *History of Greece*, the Athenian gens in particular was held together by:

1. Common religious ceremonies, and exclusive privilege of the priesthood in honour of a definite god, supposed to be the primitive ancestor of the gens, and characterized in this capacity by a special surname.

2. A common burial place. (Compare Demosthenes' *Eubulides*.)

3. Mutual rights of inheritance.

4. Reciprocal obligation to afford help, defence and support against the use of force.

5. Mutual right and obligation to marry in the gens in certain cases, especially for orphaned daughters or heiresses.

6. Possession, in some cases at least, of common property, and of an archon (magistrate) and treasurer of its own.

The phratry, binding together several gentes, was less intimate, but here too we find mutual rights and duties of similar character, especially a communion of particular religious rites and the right of prosecution in the event of a phrator being slain. Again, all the phratries of a tribe performed periodically certain common sacred ceremonies under the presidency of a magistrate called the

*phylobasileus* (tribal magistrate) selected from among the nobles (*eupatrides*).

Thus Grote. And Marx adds: "In the Grecian gens the savage (for example, the Iroquois) is unmistakably discerned." He becomes still more unmistakable when we investigate somewhat further.

{For the Grecian gens has also the following attributes:

7. Descent according to father right.

8. Prohibition of intermarrying in the gens except in the case of heiresses. This exception and its formulation as an injunction clearly proves the validity of the old rule. This follows also from the universally accepted rule that when a woman married she renounced the religious rites of her gens and acquired those of the gens of her husband, in whose phratry she was enrolled. This, and a famous passage in Dicaearchus, go to prove that marriage outside of the gens was the rule. Becker in *Charicles* directly assumes that nobody was permitted to marry in his or her own gens.

9. The right of adoption into the gens; it was practised by adoption into the family, but with public formalities, and only in exceptional cases.

10. The right to elect and depose the chiefs. We know that every gens had its archon; but nowhere is it stated that this office was hereditary in certain families. Until the end of barbarism, the probability is always against strict heredity, which would be totally incompatible with conditions where rich and poor had absolutely equal rights in the gens.

Not only Grote, but also Niebuhr, Mommsen and all other previous historians of classical antiquity failed to solve the problem of the gens. Although they correctly noted many of its distinguishing features, they always regarded it as a *group of families* and thus made it impossible for themselves to understand the nature and origin of the gens. Under the gentile constitution, the family was never a unit of organization, nor could it be, for man and wife necessarily belonged to two different gentes. The gens as a whole belonged to the phratry, the phratry to the tribe; but in the case of the family, it half belonged to the gens of the husband and half to that of the wife. The state, too, does not recognize the family in public law; to this day it exists only in civil law. Nevertheless, all written history so far takes as its point of departure the absurd assumption, which became inviolable in the eighteenth century, that the monogamian individual family, an institution scarcely older than civilization, is the nucleus around which society and the state gradually crystallized.

"Mr. Grote will also please note," adds Marx, "that although the Greeks traced their gentes to mythology, the gentes are older than

mythology with its gods and demigods, which *they themselves* had created."

Grote is quoted with preference by Morgan as a prominent and quite unsuspecting witness. He relates further that every Athenian gens had a name derived from its reputed ancestor; that before Solon's time as a general rule, and afterwards if a man died intestate, his gentiles (*gennêtes*) inherited his property; and that if a man was murdered, first his relatives, next his *gennêtes*, and finally the phrators of the slain had the right and duty to prosecute the criminal in the courts: "all that we hear of the most ancient Athenian laws is based upon the gentile and phratric divisions."

The descent of the gentes from common ancestors has been a brain-racking puzzle to the "school-taught philistines" (*Marx*). Naturally, since they claim that these ancestors are purely mythical, they are at a loss to explain how the gentes developed out of separate and distinct, originally totally unrelated families; yet they must accomplish this somehow, if only to explain the existence of the gentes. So they circle round in a whirlpool of words and do not get beyond the phrase: the genealogy is indeed mythical, but the gens is real. And finally, Grote says—the bracketed remarks being by *Marx*—: "We hear of this genealogy but rarely, because it is only brought before the public in certain cases pre-eminent and venerable. But the humbler gentes had their common rites [rather peculiar, Mr. Grote!] and common superhuman ancestor and genealogy, as well as the more celebrated [how very peculiar this, Mr. Grote, in *humbler* gentes!]: the scheme and ideal basis [my dear sir! Not *ideal*, but carnal—*germanice*<sup>1</sup> *fleischlich*!] was the same in all."

*Marx* sums up *Morgan's* reply to this as follows: "The system of consanguinity corresponding to the gens in its original form—the Greeks once possessed it like other mortals—preserved the knowledge of the mutual relation of all members of the gens. They learned this for them decisively important fact by practice from early childhood. With the advent of the monogamian family this dropped into oblivion. The gentile name created a genealogy compared with which that of the monogamian family seemed insignificant. This name was now to attest to its bearers the fact of their common ancestry. But the genealogy of the gens went so far back that its members could no longer prove their mutual real kinship, except in a limited number of cases of more recent common ancestors. The name itself was the proof of a common ancestry, and conclusive proof, except in cases of adoption. The actual denial of all kinship between

<sup>1</sup>In plain German.—*Ed.*

gentiles à la Grote and Niebuhr, which transforms the gens into a purely fictitious, fanciful creation of the brain, is, on the other hand, worthy of 'ideal' scientists, that is, of cloistered bookworms. Because the concatenation of the generations, especially with the incipience of monogamy, is removed into the distance, and the reality of the past seems reflected in mythological fantasy, the good old philistines concluded, and still conclude, that the fancied genealogy created real gentes!"

As among the Americans, the *phratry* was a mother gens, split up into several daughter gentes, and at the same time uniting them, often tracing them all to a common ancestor. Thus, according to Grote, "all the contemporary members of the phratry of Hekataeus had a common god for their ancestor at the sixteenth degree." Hence, all the gentes of this phratry were literally brother gentes. The phratry is still mentioned by Homer as a military unit in that famous passage where Nestor advises Agamemnon: Draw up the troops by tribes and by phratries so that phratry may support phratry, and tribe tribe.

The phratry also has the right and the duty to prosecute the murderer of a phrator, indicating that in former times it had the duty of blood revenge. Furthermore, it has common sanctuaries and festivals; for the development of the entire Grecian mythology from the traditional old Aryan cult of nature was essentially due to the gentes and phratries and took place within them. The phratry also had a chief (*phratriarchos*) and, in the opinion of de Coulanges, assemblies which would make binding decisions, a tribunal and an administration. Even the state of a later period, while ignoring the gens, left certain public functions to the phratry.

A number of kindred phratries constituted a tribe. In Attica there were four tribes of three phratries each, each phratry consisting of thirty gentes. This meticulous division of the groups presupposes a conscious and planned interference with the order of things that had taken shape spontaneously. How, when and why this was done Grecian history does not disclose, for the Greeks themselves preserved memories that did not reach beyond the Heroic Age.

Closely packed in a comparatively small territory as the Greeks were, their differences in dialect were less conspicuous than those that developed in the extensive American forests. Nevertheless, even here we find only tribes of the same main dialect united in a larger aggregate; and even little Attica had its own dialect, which later on became the prevailing language in Greek prose.

In the epics of Homer we generally find the Greek tribes already combined into small peoples, within which, however, the gentes, phratries and tribes still retained their full independence. They al-

ready lived in walled cities. The population increased with the growth of the herds, with field agriculture and the beginnings of the handicrafts. With this came increased differences in wealth, which gave rise to an aristocratic element within the old natural-grown democracy. The various small peoples engaged in constant warfare for the possession of the best land and also for the sake of loot. The enslavement of prisoners of war was already a recognized institution.

The constitution of these tribes and small peoples was as follows:

1. The permanent authority was the *council* (*boulé*), originally composed, most likely, of the chiefs of the gentes, but later on, when their number became too large, selected, which created the opportunity to develop and strengthen the aristocratic element. Dionysius definitely speaks of the council of the Heroic Age as being composed of notables (*kratistoi*). The council had the final decision in important matters. In Aeschylus, the council of Thebes passes a decision binding in the given case that the body of Eteocles be buried with full honours, and that the body of Polyneices be thrown out to be devoured by the dogs. Later, with the rise of the state, this council was transformed into a senate.

2. The *popular assembly* (*agora*). Among the Iroquois we saw that the people, men and women, stood in a circle around the council meetings, taking an orderly part in the discussions and thus influencing its decisions. Among the Homeric Greeks, this *Umstand*,<sup>1</sup> to use an old German legal expression, had developed into a complete popular assembly, as was also the case with the ancient Germans. The assembly was convened by the council to decide important matters; every man had the right to speak. The decision was made by a show of hands (Aeschylus in *The Suppliants*), or by acclamation. It was sovereign and final, for, as Schömann says in his *Antiquities of Greece*,<sup>2</sup> "Whenever a matter is discussed that requires the cooperation of the people for its execution, Homer gives us no indication of any means by which the people could be forced to it against their will." At this time, when every adult male member of the tribe was a warrior, there was as yet no public authority separated from the people that could have been set up against it. Primitive democracy was still in full bloom, and this must remain the point of departure in judging power and the status of the council and of the *basileus*.

3. The *military commander* (*basileus*). On this point, Marx makes the following comment: "The European savants, most of them born

<sup>1</sup> *Umstand*: Those standing around.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> G. F. Schömann, *Griechische Alterthümer*, Bd. I-II. Berlin, 1855-59.—Ed.

servants of princes, represent the *basileus* as a monarch in the modern sense. The Yankee republican Morgan objects to this. Very ironically, but truthfully, he says of the oily Gladstone and his *Juventus Mundi*:<sup>1</sup> Mr. Gladstone, who presents to his readers the Grecian chiefs of the Heroic Age as kings and princes, with the superadded qualities of gentlemen, is forced to admit that on the whole we seem to have the custom or law of primogeniture sufficiently, but not oversharply defined." As a matter of fact, Mr. Gladstone himself must have realized that such a contingent system of primogeniture sufficiently but not oversharply defined is as good as none at all.

What the position as regards heredity was in the case of the offices of chiefs among the Iroquois and also other Indians we have already seen. In so far as all officials were elected, mostly within the gens, they were, to that extent, hereditary in the gens. Gradually, a vacancy came to be filled preferably by the next gentile relative—the brother or the sister's son—unless good reasons existed for passing him over. The fact that in Greece, under father right, the office of *basileus* was generally transmitted to the son, or one of the sons, only indicates that the probability of succession by public election was in favour of the sons; but it by no means implies legal succession without public election. Here we perceive, among the Iroquois and Greeks, the first rudiments of special aristocratic families within the gentes, and among the Greeks also the first rudiments of the future hereditary chieftainship or monarchy. Hence it is to be supposed that among the Greeks the *basileus* was either elected by the people or, at least, had to be confirmed by its recognized organ—the council or the *agora*—as was the case with the Roman "king" (*rex*).

In the *Iliad* the ruler of men, Agamemnon, appears, not as the supreme king of the Greeks, but as supreme commander of a federal army before a besieged city. And when dissension broke out among the Greeks, it is to this quality of his that Odysseus points in the famous passage: the commanding of many is not a good thing; let us have one commander, etc. (to which the popular verse about the sceptre was added later). "Odysseus is not here lecturing on the form of government, but is demanding obedience to the supreme commander of the army in the field. For the Greeks, who appear before Troy only as an army, the proceedings in the *agora* are sufficiently democratic. When speaking of gifts, that is, the division of the spoils, Achilles never makes Agamemnon or some other *basileus* the divider, but always the

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<sup>1</sup> W. E. Gladstone, *Juventus Mundi* [Youth of the World]. The Gods and Men of the Heroic Age. London 1869.—Ed.

'sons of the Achaeans,' that is to say, the people. The attributes 'begotten of Zeus,' 'nourished by Zeus,' do not prove anything, because *every* gens is descended from some god, and the gens of the tribal chief from a 'prominent' god, in this case Zeus. Even bondsmen, such as the swineherd Eumaeus and others, are 'divine' (*dioi* or *theioi*), even in the *Odyssey*, and hence in a much later period than the *Iliad*. Likewise in the *Odyssey*, we find the name of *heros* given to the herald Mulios as well as to the blind bard Demodocus. In short, the word *basileia*, which the Greek writers apply to Homer's so-called kingship (because military leadership is its chief distinguishing mark), with the council and popular assembly alongside of it, means merely—military democracy." (Marx.)

Besides military functions, the *basileus* had also sacerdotal and judicial functions; the latter were not clearly specified, but the former he exercised in his capacity of highest representative of the tribe, or of the confederacy of tribes. There is no reference anywhere to civil, administrative functions; but it seems that he was *ex officio* a member of the council. Etymologically, it is quite correct to translate *basileus* as king, because king (*kuning*) is derived from *kuni*, *künne*, and signifies chief of a gens. But the old-Greek *basileus* in no wise corresponds to the modern meaning of the word king. Thucydides expressly refers to the old *basileia* as *patriké*, that is, derived from the gens, and states that it had specified, hence restricted, functions. And Aristotle says that the *basileia* of the Heroic Age was a leadership over freemen, and that the *basileus* was a military chief, judge and high priest. Hence, the *basileus* had no governmental power in the later sense.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, in the Grecian constitution of the Heroic Age, we still find the old gentile system full of vigour; but we also see the beginning of its decay: father right and the inheritance of property by the children, which favoured the accumulation of wealth in the family and gave the latter power as against the gens; differentiation in wealth affecting in turn the social constitution by creating first rudiments of a hereditary nobility and monarchy; slavery, first limited to prisoners of war, but already paving the way to the enslave-

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<sup>1</sup> Like the Grecian *basileus*, the Aztec military chief has been wrongly presented as a prince in the modern sense. Morgan was the first to subject to historical criticism the reports of the Spaniards, who at first misunderstood and exaggerated, and later deliberately misrepresented things; he showed that the Mexicans were in the middle stage of barbarism, but on a higher plane than the New Mexican Pueblo Indians, and that their constitution, so far as the garbled accounts enable us to judge, corresponded to the following: a confederacy of three tribes, which had made a number of others tributary, and which was governed by a federal council and a federal military chief, whom the Spaniards had made into an "emperor."—[Note by Engels.]

ment of fellow members of the tribe and even of the gens; the degeneration of the old intertribal warfare to systematic raids, on land and sea, for the purpose of capturing cattle, slaves, and treasure as a regular means of gaining a livelihood. In short, wealth is praised and respected as the highest treasure, and the old gentile institutions are perverted in order to justify forcible robbery of wealth. Only one thing was missing: an institution that would not only safeguard the newly-acquired property of private individuals against the communistic traditions of the gentile order, would not only sanctify private property, formerly held in such light esteem, and pronounce this sanctification the highest purpose of human society, but would also stamp the gradually developing new forms of acquiring property, and consequently, of constantly accelerating increase in wealth, with the seal of general public recognition; an institution that would perpetuate, not only the newly-rising class division of society, but also the right of the possessing class to exploit the non-possessing classes and the rule of the former over the latter.

And this institution arrived. The *state* was invented.

## V

### THE RISE OF THE ATHENIAN STATE

How the state developed, some of the organs of the gentile constitution being transformed, some displaced, by the intrusion of new organs, and, finally, all superseded by real governmental authorities—while the place of the actual “people in arms” defending itself through its gentes, phratries and tribes was taken by an armed “public power” at the service of these authorities and, therefore, also available against the people—all this can nowhere be traced better, at least in its initial stage, than in ancient Athens. The forms of the changes are, in the main, described by Morgan; the economic content which gave rise to them I had largely to add myself.

In the Heroic Age, the four tribes of the Athenians were still installed in separate parts of Attica. Even the twelve phratries comprising them seem still to have had separate seats in the twelve towns of Cecrops. The constitution was that of the Heroic Age: a popular assembly, a popular council, a *basileus*. As far back as written history goes we find the land already divided up and transformed into private property, which corresponds with the relatively developed state of commodity production and a commensurate commodity trade towards the end of the higher stage of barbarism. In addition to cereals, wine and oil were cultivated. Commerce on the Aegean Sea passed more and more from Phoenician into Attic hands. As a



result of the purchase and sale of land and the continued division of labour between agriculture and handicrafts, trade and navigation, the members of gentes, phratries and tribes very soon intermingled. The districts of the phratry and the tribe received inhabitants who, although they were fellow countrymen, did not belong to these bodies and, therefore, were strangers in their own places of residence. For in time of peace, every phratry and every tribe administered its own affairs without consulting the popular council or the *basileus* in Athens. But inhabitants of the area of the phratry or tribe not belonging to either naturally could not take part in the administration.

This so disturbed the regulated functioning of the organs of the gentile constitution that a remedy was already needed in the Heroic Age. A constitution, attributed to Theseus, was introduced. The main feature of this change was the institution of a central administration in Athens, that is to say, some of the affairs that hitherto had been conducted independently by the tribes were declared to be common affairs and transferred to a general council sitting in Athens. Thereby, the Athenians went a step further than any ever taken by any indigenous people in America: the simple federation of neighbouring tribes was now supplanted by the coalescence of all the tribes into one single people. This gave rise to a system of general Athenian popular law, which stood above the legal usages of the tribes and gentes. It bestowed on the citizens of Athens, as such, certain rights and additional legal protection even in territory that was not their own tribe's. This, however, was the first step towards undermining the gentile constitution; for it was the first step towards the subsequent admission of citizens who were alien to all the Attic tribes and were and remained entirely outside the pale of the Athenian gentile constitution. A second institution attributed to Theseus was the division of the entire people, irrespective of gentes, phratries and tribes, into three classes: *eupatrides*, or nobles; *geomoroi*, or tillers of the land; and *demiurgi*, or artisans, and the granting to the nobles of the exclusive right to public office. True, apart from reserving to the nobles the right to hold public office, this division remained inoperative, as it created no other legal distinctions between the classes. It is important, however, because it reveals to us the new social elements that had quietly developed. It shows that the customary holding of office in the gens by certain families had already developed into a privilege of these families that was little contested; that these families, already powerful owing to their wealth, began to unite outside of their gentes into a privileged class; and that the nascent state sanctioned this usurpation. It shows, furthermore, that the division of labour between husbandmen and artisans had become strong enough to contest the superi-

ority, socially, of the old division into gentes and tribes. And finally, it proclaimed the irreconcilable antagonism between gentile society and the state. The first attempt to form a state consisted in breaking up the gentes by dividing the members of each into a privileged and an inferior class, and the latter again into two vocational classes, thus setting one against the other.

The ensuing political history of Athens up to the time of Solon is only incompletely known. The office of *basileus* fell into disuse; *archons*, elected from among the nobility, became the heads of the state. The rule of the nobility steadily increased until, round about 600 B.C., it became unbearable. The principal means for stifling the liberty of the commonalty were—money and usury. The nobility lived mainly in and around Athens, where maritime commerce, with occasional piracy as a sideline, enriched it and concentrated monetary wealth in its hands. From this point the developing money system penetrated like a corroding acid into the traditional life of the rural communities founded on natural economy. The gentile constitution is absolutely incompatible with the money system. The ruin of the Attic small-holding peasants coincided with the loosening of the old gentile bonds that protected them. Creditors' bills and mortgage bonds—for by then the Athenians had also invented the mortgage—respected neither the gens nor the phratry. But the old gentile constitution knew nothing of money, credit and monetary debt. Hence the constantly expanding money rule of the nobility gave rise to a new law, that of custom, to protect the creditor against the debtor and sanction the exploitation of the small peasant by the money owner. All the rural districts of Attica bristled with mortgage posts bearing the legend that the lot on which they stood was mortgaged to so and so for so and so much. The fields that were not so designated had for the most part been sold on account of overdue mortgages or non-payment of interest and had become the property of the noble-born usurers; the peasant was glad if he was permitted to remain as a tenant and live on *one-sixth* of the product of his labour while paying *five-sixths* to his new master as rent. More than that: if the sum obtained from the sale of the lot did not cover the debt, or if such a debt was not secured by a pledge, the debtor had to sell his children into slavery abroad in order to satisfy the creditor's claim. The sale of his children by the father—such was the first fruit of father right and monogamy! And if the bloodsucker was still unsatisfied, he could sell the debtor himself into slavery. Such was the pleasant dawn of civilization among the Athenian people.

Formerly, when the conditions of life of the people were still in keeping with the gentile constitution, such a revolution would

have been impossible; but here it had come about nobody knew how. Let us return for a moment to the Iroquois. Among them a state of things like that which had now imposed itself on the Athenians without their own doing, so to say, and certainly against their will, was inconceivable. There the mode of production of the means of subsistence, which, year in and year out, remained unchanged, could never give rise to such conflicts, imposed from without, as it were; to antagonism between rich and poor, between exploiters and exploited. The Iroquois were still far from controlling the forces of nature; but within the limits set for them by nature they were masters of their production. Apart from bad harvests in their little gardens, the exhaustion of the fish supply in their lakes and rivers, or of game in their forests, they knew what the outcome would be of their mode of gaining a livelihood. The outcome would be: means of sustenance, meagre or abundant; but it could never be unpremeditated social upheavals, the severing of gentile bonds, or the splitting of the members of gentes and tribes into antagonistic classes fighting each other. Production was carried on within the most restricted limits, but—the producers exercised control over their own product. This was the immense advantage of barbarian production that was lost with the advent of civilization; and to win it back on the basis of the enormous control man now exercises over the forces of nature, and of the free association that is now possible, will be the task of the next generations.

Not so among the Greeks. The appearance of private property in herds of cattle and articles of luxury led to exchange between individuals, to the transformation of products into *commodities*. Here lies the root of the entire revolution that followed. When the producers no longer directly consumed their product, but let it go out of their hands in the course of exchange, they lost control over it. They no longer knew what became of it, and the possibility arose that the product might some day be turned against the producers, used as a means of exploiting and oppressing them. Hence, no society can for any length of time remain master of its own production and continue to control the social effects of its process of production, unless it abolishes exchange between individuals.

The Athenians were soon to learn, however, how quickly after individual exchange is established and products are converted into commodities, the product manifests its rule over the producer. With the production of commodities came the tilling of the soil by individual cultivators for their own account, soon followed by individual ownership of the land. Then came money, that universal commodity for which all others could be exchanged. But when men invented money they little suspected that they were creating a new social power,

the one universal power to which the whole of society must bow. It was this new power, suddenly sprung into existence without the will or knowledge of its own creators, that the Athenians felt in all the brutality of its youth.

What was to be done? The old gentile organization had not only proved impotent against the triumphant march of money; it was also absolutely incapable of providing a place within its framework for such things as money, creditors, debtors and the forcible collection of debts. But the new social power was there, and neither pious wishes nor a longing for the return of the good old times could drive money and usury out of existence. Moreover, a number of other, minor breaches had been made in the gentile constitution. The indiscriminate mingling of the gentiles and phrators throughout the whole of Attica, and especially in the city of Athens, increased from generation to generation, in spite of the fact that an Athenian, while allowed to sell plots of land out of his gens, was still prohibited from thus selling his dwelling house. The division of labour between the different branches of production—agriculture, handicraft, numerous skills within the various crafts, trade, navigation, etc.—had developed more fully with the progress of industry and commerce. The population was now divided according to occupation into rather well-defined groups, each of which had a number of new, common interests that found no place in the gens or phratry and, therefore, necessitated the creation of new offices to attend to them. The number of slaves had increased considerably and must have far exceeded that of the free Athenians even at this early stage. The gentile constitution originally knew no slavery and was, therefore, ignorant of any means of holding this mass of bondsmen in check. And finally, commerce had attracted a great many strangers who settled in Athens because it was easier to make money there, and according to the old constitution these strangers enjoyed neither rights nor the protection of the law. In spite of traditional toleration, they remained a disturbing and foreign element among the people.

In short, the gentile constitution was coming to an end. Society was daily growing more and more out of it; it was powerless to check or allay even the most distressing evils that were arising under its very eyes. In the meantime, however, the state had quietly developed. The new groups formed by division of labour, first between town and country, then between the various branches of urban industry, had created new organs to protect their interests. Public offices of every description were instituted. And then the young state needed above all, its own fighting forces, which among the seafaring Athenians could at first be only naval forces, to be used for occasional small wars and to protect merchant vessels. At some uncertain

time before Solon, the naucraries were instituted, small territorial districts, twelve in each tribe. Every naucrary had to furnish, equip and man a war vessel and, in addition, detail two horsemen. This arrangement was a twofold attack on the gentile constitution. First, it created a public power which was no longer simply identical with the armed people in its totality; secondly, it for the first time divided the people for public purposes, not according to kinship groups, but territorially, according to *common domicile*. We shall see what this signified.

As the gentile constitution could not come to the assistance of the exploited people, they could look only to the rising state. And the state brought help in the form of the constitution of Solon, while at the same time strengthening itself anew at the expense of the old constitution. Solon—the manner in which his reform of 594 B. C. was brought about does not concern us here—started the series of so-called political revolutions by an encroachment on property. All revolutions until now have been revolutions for the protection of one kind of property against another kind of property. They cannot protect one kind without violating another. In the Great French Revolution feudal property was sacrificed in order to save bourgeois property; in Solon's revolution, creditors' property had to suffer for the benefit of debtors' property. The debts were simply annulled. We are not acquainted with the exact details, but Solon boasts in his poems that he removed the mortgage posts from the encumbered lands and enabled all who had fled or had been sold abroad for debt to return home. This could have been done only by openly violating property rights. And indeed, the object of all so-called political revolutions, from first to last, was to protect *one* kind of property—by confiscating, also called stealing—*another* kind of property. It is thus absolutely true that for 2,500 years private property could be protected only by violating property rights.

But now a way had to be found to prevent such re-enslavement of the free Athenians. This was first achieved by general measures; for example, the prohibition of contracts which involved the personal hypothecation of the debtor. Furthermore, a maximum was fixed for the amount of land any one individual could own, in order to put some curb, at least, on the craving of the nobility for the peasants' land. Then followed constitutional amendments, of which the most important for us are the following:

The council was increased to four hundred members, one hundred from each tribe. Here, then, the tribe still served as a basis. But this was the only side of the old constitution that was incorporated in the new body politic. For the rest, Solon divided the citizenis into four classes, according to the amount of land owned and its

yield. Five hundred, three hundred and one hundred and fifty medimni of grain (1 medimnus equals appr. 41 litres) were the minimum yields for the first three classes; whoever had less land or none at all belonged to the fourth class. Only members of the first three classes could hold office; the highest offices were filled by the first class. The fourth class had only the right to speak and vote in the popular assembly. But here all officials were elected, here they had to give account of their actions, here all the laws were made, and here the fourth class was in the majority. The aristocratic privileges were partly renewed in the form of privileges of wealth, but the people retained the decisive power. The four classes also formed the basis for the reorganization of the fighting forces. The first two classes furnished the cavalry; the third had to serve as heavy infantry; the fourth served as light infantry, without armour, or in the navy, and probably were paid.

Thus, an entirely new element was introduced into the constitution: private ownership. The rights and duties of the citizens were graduated according to the amount of land they owned; and as the propertied classes gained influence the old consanguine groups were driven into the background. The gentile constitution suffered another defeat.

The gradation of political rights according to property, however, was not an indispensable institution for the state. Important as it may have been in the constitutional history of states, nevertheless, a good many states, and the most completely developed at that, did without it. Even in Athens it played only a transient role. Since the time of Aristides, all offices were open to all the citizens.

During the next eighty years Athenian society gradually took the course along which it further developed in subsequent centuries. Usurious land operations, rampant in the pre-Solon period, was checked, as was the unlimited concentration of landed property. Commerce and the handicrafts and useful arts conducted on an ever-increasing scale with slave labour became the predominating branches of occupation. Enlightenment made progress. Instead of exploiting their own fellow citizens in the old brutal manner, the Athenians now exploited mainly the slaves and non-Athenian clients. Movable property, wealth in money, slaves and ships, increased more and more; but instead of being simply a means for purchasing land, as in the first period with its limitations, it became an end in itself. This, on the one hand, gave rise to the successful competition of the new, wealthy industrial and commercial class with the old power of the nobility, but, on the other hand, it deprived the old gentile constitution of its last foothold. The gentes, phratries and tribes, whose members were now scattered all over Attica and lived com-

pletely intermingled, thus became entirely useless as political bodies. A large number of Athenian citizens did not belong to any gens; they were immigrants who had been adopted into citizenship, but not into any of the old bodies of *consanguinei*. Besides, there was a steadily increasing number of foreign immigrants who only enjoyed protection.

Meanwhile, the struggles of the parties proceeded. The nobility tried to regain its former privileges and for a short time recovered its supremacy, until the revolution of Cleisthenes (509 B. C.) brought about its final downfall; and with them fell the last remnants of the gentile constitution.

In his new constitution, Cleisthenes ignored the four old tribes based on the gentes and phratries. Their place was taken by an entirely new organization based exclusively on the division of the citizens according to place of domicile, already attempted in the naucraries. Not membership of a body of *consanguinei*, but place of domicile was now the deciding factor. Not people, but territory was now divided; politically, the inhabitants became mere attachments of the territory.

The whole of Attica was divided into one hundred self-governing townships, or demes. The citizens (demots) of a deme elected their official head (demarch), a treasurer and thirty judges with jurisdiction in minor cases. They also received their own temple and a tutelary deity, or *heros*, whose priests they elected. The supreme power in the deme was the assembly of the demots. This, as Morgan correctly remarks, is the prototype of the self-governing American municipality. The modern state in its highest development ends with the very unit with which the rising state in Athens began.

Ten of these units (demes) formed a tribe, which, however, as distinct from the old gentile tribe [*Geschlechtsstamm*], was now called a local tribe [*Ortsstamm*]. The local tribe was not only a self-governing political body, but also a military body. It elected a phylarch or tribal head, who commanded the cavalry, a taxiarch, who commanded the infantry, and a *strategos*, who was in command of the entire contingent raised in the tribal territory. Furthermore, it furnished five war vessels with crews and commander; and it received an Attic *heros*, by whose name it was known, as its guardian saint. Finally, it elected fifty councillors to the council of Athens.

The consummation was the Athenian state, governed by a council of five hundred—elected by the ten tribes—and, in the last instance, by the popular assembly, which every Athenian citizen could attend and vote in. Archons and other officials attended to the different departments of administration and the courts. In Athens there was no official possessing supreme executive authority.

By this new constitution and by the admission of a large number of dependents [*Schutzverwandter*], partly immigrants and partly freed slaves, the organs of the gentile constitution were eliminated from public affairs. They sank to the position of private associations and religious societies. But their moral influence, the traditional conceptions and views of the old gentile period, survived for a long time and expired only gradually. This was evident in another state institution.

We have seen that an essential feature of the state is a public power distinct from the mass of the people. At that time Athens possessed only a militia and a navy equipped and manned directly by the people. These afforded protection against external enemies and held the slaves in check, who at that time already constituted the great majority of the population. For the citizens, this public power at first existed only in the shape of the police force, which is as old as the state, and that is why the naïve Frenchmen of the eighteenth century spoke, not of civilized, but of policed nations (*nations policées*). Thus, simultaneously with their state, the Athenians established a police force, a veritable gendarmerie of foot and mounted bowmen—*Landjäger*, as they say in South Germany and Switzerland. This gendarmerie consisted—of *slaves*. The free Athenian regarded this police duty as being so degrading that he preferred being arrested by an armed slave rather than perform such ignominious duties himself. This was still an expression of the old gentile mentality. The state could not exist without a police force, but it was still young and did not yet command sufficient moral respect to give prestige to an occupation that necessarily appeared infamous to the old gentiles.

How well this state, now completed in its main outlines, suited the new social condition of the Athenians was apparent from the rapid growth of wealth, commerce and industry. The class antagonism on which the social and political institutions rested was no longer that between the nobles and the common people, but that between slaves and freemen, dependents and citizens. When Athens was at the height of prosperity the total number of free Athenian citizens, women and children included, amounted to about 90,000; the slaves of both sexes numbered 365,000, and the dependents—immigrants and freed slaves—45,000. Thus, for every adult male citizen there were at least eighteen slaves and more than two dependents. The large number of slaves is explained by the fact that many of them worked together in manufactories with large rooms under overseers. With the development of commerce and industry came the accumulation and concentration of wealth in a few hands; the mass of the free citizens was impoverished and had to choose



between going into handicrafts and competing with slave labour, which was considered ignoble and base and, moreover, promised little success—and complete pauperization. Under the prevailing circumstances what happened was the latter, and being in the majority they dragged the whole Athenian state down with them. It was not democracy that caused the downfall of Athens, as the European schoolmasters who cringe before royalty would have us believe, but slavery, which brought the labour of the free citizen into contempt.

The rise of the state among the Athenians presents a very typical example of state building in general; because, on the one hand, it took place in a pure form, without the interference of violence, external or internal (the short period of usurpation by Pisistratus left no trace behind it); because, on the other hand, it represented the rise of a highly developed form of state, the democratic republic, emerging directly out of gentile society; and lastly, because we are sufficiently acquainted with all the essential details.

## VI

### THE GENS AND THE STATE IN ROME

According to the legend about the foundation of Rome, the first settlement was undertaken by a number of Latin gentes (one hundred, the legend says) united into one tribe. A Sabellian tribe, also said to consist of one hundred gentes, soon followed, and finally a third tribe of various elements, again numbering one hundred gentes, joined them. The whole story reveals at the very first glance that here hardly anything except the gens was a natural product, and that the gens itself, in many cases, was only an offshoot of a mother gens still existing in the old habitat. The tribes bear the mark of having been artificially constituted; nevertheless, they consisted mostly of kindred elements and were formed on the model of the old, naturally grown, not artificially constituted, tribe; and it is not improbable that a genuine old tribe formed the nucleus of each of these three tribes. The connecting link, the phratry, contained ten gentes and was called the *curia*. Hence, there were thirty of them.

That the Roman gens was an institution identical with the Grecian gens is a recognized fact; if the Grecian gens was a continuation of the social unit the primitive form of which is presented by the American Redskins, then the same, naturally, holds good for the Roman gens. Hence, we can be more brief in its treatment.

At least during the earliest times of the city, the Roman gens had the following constitution:

1. Mutual right of inheritance of the property of deceased gentiles; the property remained in the gens. Since father right was already in force in the Roman gens, as it was in the Grecian gens, the offspring of female lineage were excluded. According to the law of the Twelve Tables, the oldest written law of Rome known to us, the natural children had the first title to the estate; in case no natural children existed, the *agnates* (kin of *male* lineage) took their place; and in their absence came the gentiles. In all cases the property remained in the gens. Here we observe the gradual infiltration into gentile practice of new legal provisions, caused by increased wealth and monogamy: the originally equal right of inheritance of the gentiles was first limited in practice to the *agnates*, probably at a very remote date as mentioned above, and afterwards to the children and their offspring in the male line. Of course, in the Twelve Tables this appears in reverse order.

2. Possession of a common burial place. The patrician gens Claudia, on immigrating into Rome from Regilli, received a plot and also a common burial place in the city. Even under Augustus, the head of Varus, who had fallen in the Teutoburg Forest, was brought to Rome and interred in the *gentilitius tumulus*;<sup>1</sup> hence, his gens (Quinctilia) still had its own tomb.

3. Common religious celebrations. These, the *sacra gentilitia*, are well known.

4. Obligation not to marry within the gens. In Rome this does not appear to have ever become a written law, but the custom remained. Of the innumerable names of Roman married couples that have come down to our day there is not a single case where husband and wife have the same gentile name. The law of inheritance also proves this rule. A woman by her marriage forfeited her agnatic rights, left her gens, and neither she nor her children could inherit her father's property, or that of his brothers, for otherwise the father's gens would lose the property. This rule has a meaning only on the assumption that the woman was not permitted to marry a member of her own gens.

5. Possession of land in common. In primeval times this always obtained when the tribal territory was first divided. Among the Latin tribes we find the land partly in the possession of the tribe, partly of the gens, and partly of households that could hardly have represented single families at that time. Romulus is credited with having been the first to assign land to single individuals, about a

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<sup>1</sup> Mound of the gens.—Ed.

hectare (two *jugera*) to each. Nevertheless, even later we still find land in the hands of the gentes, not to mention state lands, around which the whole internal history of the republic turned.

6. Reciprocal obligation of members of the gens to assist and help redress injuries. Written history records only paltry remnants of this; from the outset the Roman state manifested such superior power that the duty of redress of injury devolved upon it. When Appius Claudius was arrested, his whole gens, including his personal enemies, put on mourning. At the time of the second Punic War the gentes united to ransom their fellow gentiles who were in captivity; they were *forbidden* to do this by the senate.

7. Right to bear the gentile name. This was in force until the time of the emperors. Freed slaves were permitted to assume the gentile names of their former masters, although without gentile rights.

8. Right of adopting strangers into the gens. This was done by adoption into a family (as among the Red Indians), which brought with it adoption into the gens.

9. The right to elect and depose chiefs is nowhere mentioned. Inasmuch, however, as during the first period of Rome's existence all offices, from the elective king downward, were filled by election or appointment, and as the *curiae* elected also their own priests, we are justified in assuming that the same existed in regard to the gentile chiefs (*principes*)—no matter how well-established the rule of choosing the candidates from the same family may have been already.

Such were the powers of a Roman gens. With the exception of the complete transition to father right, they are the true image of the rights and duties of an Iroquois gens. Here, too, "the Iroquois is plainly discerned."

The confusion that still reigns even among our most authoritative historians on the question of the Roman gentile order is shown by the following example: In his treatise on Roman proper names of the Republican and Augustinian era (*Roman Researches*, Berlin, 1864, vol. I<sup>1</sup>), Mommsen writes: "The gentile name is not only borne by all male gentiles, including adopted persons and wards, except, of course, the slaves, but also by the women. . . . The tribe [*Stamm*] (as Mommsen here translates *gens*) is . . . a community derived from a common—actual, assumed or even invented—ancestor and united by common rites, burial places and inheritance. All personally free individuals, hence women also, may and must be registered in them. But determin-

<sup>1</sup> Th. Mommsen, *Römische Forschungen*. Ausg. 2, Bd. I-II. Berlin 1864-78.—Ed.

ing the gentile name of a married woman offers some difficulty. This indeed did not exist as long as women were prohibited from marrying anyone but members of their own gens; and evidently for a long time the women found it much more difficult to marry outside the gens than in it. This right, the *gentis enuptio*,<sup>1</sup> was still bestowed as a personal privilege and reward during the sixth century. . . . But wherever such outside marriages occurred the woman in primeval times must have been transferred to the tribe of her husband. Nothing is more certain than that by the old religious marriage the woman fully joined the legal and sacramental community of her husband and left her own. Who does not know that the married woman forfeits her active and passive right of inheritance in respect to her gentiles, but enters the inheritance group of her husband, her children and his gentiles? And if her husband adopts her as his child and brings her into his family, how can she remain separated from his gens?" (Pp. 9-11.)

Thus, Mommsen asserts that Roman women belonging to a certain gens were originally free to marry only *within* their gens; according to him, the Roman gens, therefore, was endogamous, not exogamous. This opinion, which contradicts the experience of all other peoples, is principally, if not exclusively, based on a single, much disputed passage in Livy (Book xxxix, ch. 19) according to which the senate decreed in the year 568 of the City, that is, 186 B. C., *uti Feceniae Hispallae datio, diminutio, gentis enuptio, tutoris optio item esset quasi ei vir testamento dedisset; utique ei ingenuo nubere liceret, neu quid ei qui eam duxisset, ob id fraudi ignominiaevae esset*—that Fecenia Hispalla shall have the right to dispose of her property, to diminish it, to marry outside of the gens, to choose a guardian, just as if her (deceased) husband had conferred this right on her by testament; that she shall be permitted to marry a freeman and that for the man who marries her this shall not constitute a misdemeanour or disgrace.

Undoubtedly, Fecenia, a freed slave, here obtained permission to marry outside of the gens. And it is equally doubtless, according to this, that the husband had the right to confer on his wife by testament the right to marry outside of the gens after his death. But outside of *which* gens?

If a woman had to marry in her gens, as Mommsen assumes, then she remained in this gens after her marriage. In the first place, however, this assertion that the gens was endogamous is the very thing to be proved. In the second place, if the woman had to marry in the gens, then naturally the man had to do the same, otherwise

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<sup>1</sup> Of marrying outside the gens.—*Ed.*

he could never get a wife. Then we arrive at a state where a man could by testament confer on his wife a right which he did not possess himself for his own enjoyment, which brings us to a legal absurdity. Mommsen realizes this, and therefore conjectures: "marriage outside of the gens most probably required in law not only the consent of the person authorized, but of all members of the gens." (P. 10, note.) First, this is a very bold assumption; and secondly, it contradicts the clear wording of the passage. The senate gives her this right as her *husband's proxy*; it expressly gives her no more and no less than her husband could have given her; but what it does give is an *absolute* right, free from all restriction, so that, if she should make use of it, her new husband shall not suffer in consequence. The senate even instructs the present and future consuls and praetors to see that she suffers no inconvenience from the use of this right. Mommsen's supposition, therefore, appears to be absolutely inadmissible.

Then again: suppose a woman married a man from another gens, but remained in her own gens. According to the passage quoted above, her husband would then have the right to permit his wife to marry outside of her own gens. That is, he would have the right to make provisions in regard to the affairs of a gens to which he did not belong at all. The thing is so utterly unreasonable that we need say no more about it.

Nothing remains but to assume that in her first marriage the woman wedded a man from another gens and thereby became without more ado a member of her husband's gens, which Mommsen himself admits for such cases. Then the whole matter at once explains itself. The woman, torn from her old gens by her marriage, and adopted into her husband's gentile group, occupies a special position in the new gens. She is now a gentile, but not a kin by blood; the manner in which she was adopted excludes from the outset all prohibition of marrying in the gens into which she has entered by marriage. She has, moreover, been adopted into the marriage group of the gens and on her husband's death inherits some of his property, that is to say, the property of a fellow member of the gens. What is more natural than that this property should remain in the gens and that she should be obliged to marry a member of her first husband's gens and no other? If, however, an exception is to be made, who is more competent to authorize this than the man who bequeathed this property to her, her first husband? At the time he bequeathed a part of his property to her and simultaneously gave her permission to transfer this property to another gens by marriage, or as a result of marriage, he was still the owner of this property; hence he was literally only disposing of his own property. As for the woman and her relation to her husband's gens, it was the husband who, by an act of his own free will—the

marriage—introduced her into his gens. Thus, it appears quite natural, too, that he should be the proper person to authorize her to leave this gens by another marriage. In short, the matter appears simple and obvious as soon as we discard the strange conception of an endogamous Roman gens and, with Morgan, regard it as having originally been exogamous.

Finally, there is still another view, which has probably found the largest number of advocates, namely, that the passage in Livy only means "that freed slave girls (*libertae*) cannot, without special permission, *e gente enubere* (marry outside of the gens) or take any step which, being connected with *capitis deminutio minima*,<sup>1</sup> would result in the *liberta* leaving the gentile group." (Lange, *Roman Antiquities*, Berlin, 1856, vol. I, p. 195,<sup>2</sup> where the passage we have taken from Livy is commented on in a reference to Huschke.) If this assumption is correct, the passage proves still less as regards the status of free Roman women, and there is so much less ground for speaking of their obligation to marry in the gens.

The expression *enuptio gentis* occurs only in this single passage and is not found anywhere else in the entire Roman literature. The word *enubere*, to marry outside, is found only three times, also in Livy, and not in reference to the gens. The fantastic idea that Roman women were permitted to marry only in their gens owes its existence solely to this single passage. But it cannot be sustained in the least; for either the passage refers to special restrictions for freed slave women, in which case it proves nothing for free-born women (*ingeniuae*); or it applies also to free-born women, in which case it rather proves that the women as a rule married outside of the gens and were by their marriage transferred to their husbands' gens. Hence it speaks against Mommsen and for Morgan.

Almost three hundred years after the foundation of Rome the gentile bonds were still so strong that a patrician gens, the Fabians, with permission from the senate could undertake by itself an expedition against the neighbouring town of Veii. Three hundred and six Fabians are said to have marched out and to have been killed in an ambush. A single boy, left behind, propagated the gens.

As we have said, ten gentes formed a phratry, which here was called a *curia*, and was endowed with more important functions than the Grecian phratry. Every *curia* had its own religious practices, sacred relics and priests. The latter in a body formed one of the Roman colleges of priests. Ten *curiae* formed a tribe, which probably had originally its own elected chief—leader in war and high priest—like

<sup>1</sup> Slightest loss of family rights.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> L. Lange, *Römische Alterthümer*. Bd. I-III. Berlin 1856-71.—Ed.

the rest of the Latin tribes. The three tribes together formed the Roman people, the *populus romanus*.

Thus, only those could belong to the Roman people who were members of a gens, and hence of a *curia* and tribe. The first constitution of this people was as follows. Public affairs were conducted by the senate composed, as Niebuhr was the first to state correctly, of the chiefs of the three hundred gentes; as the elders of the gentes they were called fathers, *patres*, and as a body senate (council of elders, from *senex*, old). Here too the customary choice of men from the same family in each gens brought into being the first hereditary nobility. These families called themselves patricians and claimed the exclusive right to the seats in the senate and to all other offices. The fact that in the course of time the people allowed this claim so that it became an actual right is expressed in the legend that Romulus bestowed the rank of patrician and its privileges on the first senators and their descendants. The senate, like the Athenian *boulê*, had power to decide in many affairs and to undertake the preliminary discussion of more important measures, especially of new laws. These were decided by the popular assembly, called *comitia curiata* (assembly of *curiae*). The assembled people are grouped by *curiae*, in each *curia* probably by gentes, and in deciding questions each of the thirty *curiae* had one vote. The assembly of *curiae* adopted or rejected laws, elected all higher officials including the *rex* (so-called king), declared war (but the senate concluded peace), and decided as a supreme court, on appeal of the parties, all cases involving capital punishment for Roman citizens. Finally, by the side of the senate and the popular assembly stood the *rex*, corresponding exactly to the Grecian *basileus*, and by no means such an almost absolute monarch as Mommsen represents him to have been.<sup>1</sup> The *rex* also was military commander, high priest and presiding officer of certain courts. He had no civil functions, or any power over life, liberty and property of the citizens whatever, except such as resulted from his disciplinary power as military commander or from his power to execute sentence as presiding officer of the court. The office of *rex* was not hereditary; on the contrary, he was first elected, probably on the

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<sup>1</sup> The Latin *rex* is equivalent to the Celtic-Irish *righ* (tribal chief) and the Gothic *reiks*. That this, like our *Fürst* (English first and Danish *förste*), originally signified gentile or tribal chief is evident from the fact that the Goths in the fourth century already had a special term for the king of later times, the military chief of a whole people, namely, *thiudans*. In Ulfila's translation of the Bible Artaxerxes and Herod are never called *reiks* but *thiudans*, and the realm of the Emperor Tiberius not *reiki*, but *thiudinassus*. In the name of the Gothic *thiudans*, or king, as we inaccurately translate it, *Thiudareiks*, *Theodorich*, that is, *Dietrich*, both names flow together. [Note by Engels.]

nomination of his predecessor, by the assembly of *curiae* and then solemnly invested by a second assembly. That he could also be deposed is proved by the fate of Tarquinius Superbus.

Like the Greeks in the Heroic Age, the Romans at the time of the so-called kings lived in a military democracy based on gentes, phratries and tribes, from which it developed. Even though the *curiae* and tribes may have been partly artificial formations, they were moulded after the genuine and natural models of the society in which they originated and which still surrounded them on all sides. And though the naturally developed patrician nobility had already gained ground, though the *reges* attempted gradually to enlarge the scope of their powers—this does not change the original and fundamental character of the constitution, and this alone matters.

Meanwhile, the population of the city of Rome and of the Roman territory, enlarged by conquest, increased, partly by immigration, partly through the inhabitants of the subjugated, mostly Latin, districts. All these new subjects (we leave out the question of the clients for the moment) were outside of the old gentes, *curiae* and tribes, and so were not part of the *populus Romanus*, the Roman people proper. They were personally free, could own land, had to pay taxes and were liable to military service. But they were not eligible for office and could neither participate in the assembly of *curiae* nor in the distribution of conquered state lands. They constituted the plebs, excluded from all public rights. Owing to their continually increasing numbers, their military training and armament, they became a menace to the old *populus* who had now closed their ranks hermetically against all increase. The land, moreover, seems to have been fairly evenly divided between *populus* and plebs, while the mercantile and industrial wealth, though as yet not very considerable, may have been mainly in the hands of the plebs.

In view of the utter darkness that enshrouds the whole legendary origin of Rome's historical beginning—a darkness intensified by the rationalistic-pragmatic attempts at interpretation and reports of later legally trained authors whose works serve us as source material—it is impossible to make any definite statements about the time, the course and the causes of the revolution that put an end to the old gentile constitution. The only thing we are certain of is that its causes lay in the conflicts between the plebs and the *populus*.

The new constitution, attributed to *rex* Servius Tullius and based on the Grecian model, more especially that of Solon, created a new popular assembly including or excluding all, *populus* and plebeians alike, according to whether they rendered military service or not. The whole male population liable to military service was



divided into six classes, according to wealth. The minimum property qualifications in the first five classes were, respectively: I, 100,000 asses; II, 75,000 asses; III, 50,000 asses; IV, 25,000 asses; V, 11,000 asses; which, according to Dureau de la Malle, is equal to about 14,000, 10,500, 7,000, 3,600 and 1,570 marks, respectively. The sixth class, the proletarians, consisted of those who possessed less and were exempt from military service and taxation. In the new assembly of *centuriae* (*comitia centuriata*) the citizens formed ranks after the manner of soldiers, in companies of one hundred (*centuria*), and each *centuria* had one vote. The first class placed 80 *centuriae* in the field; the second 22, the third 20, the fourth 22, the fifth 30 and the sixth, for propriety's sake, one. To these were added 18 *centuriae* of horsemen composed of the most wealthy; altogether 193. For a majority, 97 votes were required. But the horsemen and the first class alone had together 98 votes, thus being in the majority; when they were united valid decisions were made without even asking the other classes.

Upon this new assembly of *centuriae* now devolved all the political rights of the former assembly of *curiae* (a few nominal ones excepted; the *curiae* and the *gentes* composing them were thereby, as was the case in Athens, degraded to the position of mere private and religious associations and as such they still vegetated for a long time, while the assembly of *curiae* soon fell into oblivion. In order to eliminate the three old gentile tribes, too, from the state, four territorial tribes were introduced, each tribe inhabiting one quarter of the city and receiving certain political rights.

Thus, in Rome also, the old social order based on personal ties of blood was destroyed even before the abolition of the so-called kingdom, and a new constitution, based on territorial division and distinction of wealth, a real state constitution, took its place. The public power here consisted of the citizenry liable to military service, and was directed not only against the slaves, but also against the so-called proletarians, who were excluded from military service and the right to carry arms.

The new constitution was merely further developed upon the expulsion of the last *rex*, Tarquinius Superbus, who had usurped real royal power, and the institution, in place of the *rex*, of two military commanders (consuls) with equal powers (as among the Iroquois). Within this constitution moved the whole history of the Roman republic, with all its struggles between patricians and plebeians for admission to office and a share in the state lands; and the final dissolution of the patrician nobility in the new class of big land and money owners, who gradually absorbed all the land of the peasants ruined by military service, cultivated with the aid of

slaves the enormous new tracts thus created, depopulated Italy, and thus opened the gates not only to imperial rule, but also to its successors, the German barbarians.

## VII

### THE GENS AMONG THE CELTS AND GERMANS

Space prevents us from going into the gentile institutions still found in a more or less pure form among the most diverse savage and barbarian peoples of the present day; or into the traces of such institutions found in the ancient history of civilized nations in Asia. One or the other is met with everywhere. A few illustrations may suffice: Even before the gens had been recognized it was pointed out and accurately described in its main outlines by the man who took the greatest pains to misunderstand it, McLennan, who wrote of this institution among the Kalmucks, the Circassians, the Samoyeds and three Indian peoples: the Waralis, the Magars and the Muniporees. Recently it was described by Maxim Kovalevsky, who discovered it among the Pshavs, Khevsurs, Svanetians and other Caucasian tribes. Here we shall confine ourselves to a few brief notes on the existence of the gens among Celts and Germans.

The oldest Celtic laws that have come down to our day show the gens still in full vitality. In Ireland it is alive, at least instinctively, in the popular mind to this day, after the English forcibly blew it up. It was still in full bloom in Scotland in the middle of the last century, and here, too, it succumbed only to the arms, laws and courts of the English.

The old Welsh laws, written several centuries before the English Conquest, not later than the eleventh century, still show communal field agriculture of whole villages, although only as exceptions and as the survival of a former universal custom. Every family had five acres for its own cultivation; another plot was at the same time cultivated in common and its yield divided. Judging by the Irish and Scotch analogies there cannot be any doubt that these village communities represent gentes or subdivisions of gentes, even though a reinvestigation of the Welsh laws, which I cannot undertake for lack of time (my notes are from 1869), should not directly corroborate this. The thing, however, that the Welsh sources, and the Irish, do prove directly is that among the Celts the pairing family had not yet given way to monogamy in the eleventh century. In Wales, marriage did not become indissoluble, or rather did not cease to be subject to notice of dissolution, until after seven years.

Even if only three nights were wanting to make up the seven years, a married couple could still separate. Then their property was divided between them: the woman divided, the man made his choice. The furniture was divided according to certain very funny rules. If the marriage was dissolved by the man, he had to return the woman's dowry and a few other articles; if the woman desired a separation, she received less. Of the children the man was given two, the woman, one, namely, the middle child. If the woman married again after her divorce, and her first husband fetched her back, she was obliged to follow him, even if she already had one foot in her new husband's bed. But if two people had lived together for seven years, they were considered man and wife, even without the preliminaries of a formal marriage. Chastity among girls before marriage was by no means strictly observed, nor was it demanded; the regulations governing this subject are of an extremely frivolous nature and run counter to all bourgeois morals. When a woman committed adultery, her husband had a right to beat her—this was one of three cases when he could do so without incurring a penalty—but after that he could not demand any other redress, for "the same offence shall either be atoned for or avenged, but not both." The reasons that entitled a woman to a divorce without detriment to her rights at the settlement were of a very diverse nature: the man's foul breath was a sufficient reason. The redemption money to be paid to the tribal chief or king for the right of the first night (*gobr merch*, hence the medieval name *marcheta*, French *marquette*) plays a conspicuous part in the legal code. The women had the right to vote at the popular assemblies. Add to this that similar conditions are shown to have existed in Ireland; that time marriages were also quite the custom there, and that the women were assured of liberal and well-defined privileges in case of separation, even to the point of remuneration for domestic services; that a "first wife" existed by the side of others, and in dividing a decedent's property no distinction was made between legitimate and illegitimate children—and we have a picture of the pairing family compared with which the form of marriage valid in North America seems strict; but this is not surprising in the eleventh century for a people which in Caesar's time was still living in group marriage.

The Irish gens (*sept*; the tribe was called *clainne*, clan) is confirmed and described not only by the ancient lawbooks, but also by the English jurists of the seventeenth century who were sent across for the purpose of transforming the clan lands into domains of the King of England. Up to this time, the land had been the common property of the clan or gens, except where the chiefs had already converted it into their private domain. When a gentile died,

and a household was thus dissolved, the gentile chief (called *caput cognationis* by the English jurists) redistributed the whole gentile land among the other households. This distribution must in general have taken place according to rules such as were observed in Germany. We still find a few villages—very numerous forty or fifty years ago—with fields held in so-called rundale. Each of the peasants, individual tenants on the soil that once was the common property of the gens but had been seized by the English conquerors, pays rent for his particular plot, but all the arable and meadow land is combined and shared out, according to situation and quality, in strips, or “*Gewanne*,” as they are called on the Mosel, and each one receives a share of each *Gewann*. Moorland and pastures are used in common. As recently as fifty years ago, redivision was still practised occasionally, sometimes annually. The map of such a rundale village looks exactly like that of a German community of farming households [*Gehöferschaft*] on the Mosel or in the Hochwald. The gens also survives in the “factions.” The Irish peasants often form parties that seem to be founded on absolutely absurd and senseless distinctions, quite incomprehensible to Englishmen. The only purpose of these factions is apparently to rally for the popular sport of solemnly beating the life out of one another. They are artificial reincarnations, later substitutes for the blasted gentes that in their own peculiar way demonstrate the continuation of the inherited gentile instinct. Incidentally, in some localities members of the same gens still live together on what is practically their old territory. During the thirties, for instance, the great majority of the inhabitants of the county of Monaghan had only four family names, that is, were descended from four gentes, or clans.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> During a few days that I spent in Ireland, I again realized to what extent the rural population there is still living in the conceptions of the gentile period. The landlord, whose tenant the peasant is, is still considered by the latter as a sort of clan chief who supervises the cultivation of the soil in the interest of all, is entitled to tribute from the peasant in the form of rent, but also has to assist the peasant in cases of need. Likewise, everyone in comfortable circumstances is considered under obligation to help his poorer neighbours whenever they are in distress. Such assistance is not charity; it is what the poor clansman is entitled to by right from his rich fellow clansman or clan chief. This explains why political economists and jurists complain of the impossibility of inculcating the modern idea of bourgeois property into the minds of the Irish peasants. Property that has only rights, but no duties, is absolutely beyond the ken of the Irishman. No wonder so many Irishmen with such naïve gentile conceptions, who are suddenly cast into the modern great cities of England and America, among a population with entirely different moral and legal standards, become utterly confused in their views of morals and justice, lose all hold and often were bound to succumb to demoralization in masses. [Note by Engels to the fourth edition.]

The downfall of the gentile order in Scotland dates from the suppression of the rebellion of 1745. Precisely what link in this order the Scotch clan represents remains to be investigated; no doubt it is a link. Walter Scott's novels bring the clan in the Highlands of Scotland vividly before our eyes. It is, as Morgan says, "an excellent type of the gens in organization and in spirit, and an extraordinary illustration of the power of the gentile life over its members. . . . We find in their feuds and blood revenge, in their localization by gentes, in their use of lands in common, in the fidelity of the clansman to his chief and of the members of the clan to each other, the usual and persistent features of gentile society. . . . Descent was in the male line, the children of the males remaining members of the clan, while the children of its female members belonged to the clans of their respective fathers." The fact that mother right was formerly in force in Scotland is proved by the royal family of the Picts, in which, according to Bede, inheritance in the female line prevailed. We even see evidences of the punaluan family preserved among the Scots as well as the Welsh until the Middle Ages in the right of the first night, which the chief of the clan or the king, the last representative of the former common husbands, could claim with every bride, unless redeemed.

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That the Germans were organized in gentes up to the time of the migration of peoples is an indisputable fact. Evidently they settled in the territory between the Danube, the Rhine, the Vistula and the northern seas only a few centuries before our era; the Cimbri and Teutoni were still in full migration, and the Suevi did not settle down until Caesar's time. Caesar expressly states that they settled down in gentes and kinships (*gentibus cognationibusque*), and in the mouth of a Roman of the Julia gens the word *gentibus* has a definite meaning that cannot possibly be misconstrued. This holds good for all Germans; even the settling of the conquered Roman provinces appears to have proceeded still in gentes. The Alamannian Law confirms the fact that the people settled on the conquered land south of the Danube in gentes (*genealogiae*); *genealogia* is used in exactly the same sense as *Mark* or *Dorfgenossenschaft*<sup>1</sup> was used later. Recently Kovalevsky has expressed the view that these *genealogiae* were large household communities among which the land was divided, and from which the village communities developed later on. The same may be true of the *fara*, the term which the Burgundians and Langobards—a Gothic and a Herminonian, or High German,

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<sup>1</sup> Village community.—Ed.

tribe—applied to nearly, if not exactly, the same thing that in the Alamannian book of laws is called *genealogia*. Whether this really represents the gens or the household community is a matter that must be further investigated.

The language records leave us in doubt as to whether all the Germans had a common term for gens, and if so, what term. Etymologically, the Greek *genos*, the Latin *gens*, corresponds to the Gothic *kuni*, Middle High German *künne*, and is used in the same sense. We are led back to the time of mother right by the fact that the terms for "woman" are derived from the same root: Greek *gynê*, Slav *zena*, Gothic *qvinô*, Old Norse *kona*, *kuna*. Among Lango-bards and Burgundians we find, as stated, the term *fara*, which Grimm derives from the hypothetical root *fisan*, to beget. I should prefer to trace it to the more obvious root *faran*, *fahren*, to wander, a term which designates a certain well-defined section of the nomadic train, composed, it almost goes without saying, of relatives; a term which, in the course of centuries of wandering, first to the East and then to the West, was gradually applied to the gentile community itself. Further, there is the Gothic *sibja*, Anglo-Saxon *sib*, Old High German *sippia*, *sippa*, *Sippe*.<sup>1</sup> Old Norse has only the plural *sifjar*, relatives; the singular occurs only as the name of a goddess, *Sif*. Finally, another expression occurs in the Hildebrand Song, where Hildebrand asks Hadubrand "who is your father among the men of the people . . . or what is your kin?" (*eddo huêlihhes cnuosles du sis*). If there was a common German term for gens, it might well have been the Gothic *kuni*; this is not only indicated by its identity with the corresponding term in kindred languages, but also by the fact that the word *kuning*, *König*, which originally signified chief of gens or tribe, is derived from it. *Sibja*, *Sippe*, does not appear worthy of consideration; in Old Norse, at least, *sifjar* signified not only relatives by blood, but also by marriage; hence it comprises the members of at least *two gentes*; thus the term *sif* cannot have been the term for gens.

Among the Germans, as among the Mexicans and Greeks, the horsemen as well as the wedge-like columns of infantry, were grouped in battle array by *gentes*. When Tacitus says: by families and kinships, the indefinite expression he uses is explained by the fact that in his time the gens had long ceased to be a living association in Rome.

Of decisive significance is a passage in Tacitus where he says: The mother's brother regards his nephew as his son; some even hold that the blood tie between the maternal uncle and the nephew

<sup>1</sup> Kinsfolk. —Ed.

is more sacred and close than that between father and son, so that when hostages are demanded the sister's son is considered a better pledge than the natural son of the man whom they desire to place under bond. Here we have a living survival of the mother-right, and hence original, gens, and it is described as something which particularly distinguishes the Germans.<sup>1</sup> If a member of such a gens gave his own son as a pledge for an obligation he had undertaken, and if this son became the victim of his father's breach of faith, that was the concern of the father alone. When the son of a sister was sacrificed, however, then the most sacred gentile law was violated. The next of kin, who was bound above all others to protect the boy or young man, was responsible for his death; he should either have refrained from giving the boy as a pledge, or have kept the contract. If we had no other trace of gentile organization among the Germans, this one passage would be sufficient proof.

Still more decisive, as it comes about eight hundred years later, is a passage in the Old Norse song about the twilight of the gods and the end of the world, the *Völuspá*. In this "Vision of the Seeress," in which, as Bang and Bugge have now shown, also elements of Christianity are interwoven, the description of the period of universal depravity and corruption preceding the cataclysm contains this passage:

*Broedhr munu berjask  
munu systrungar*

*ok at bönum verdask,  
sifjum spilla.*

"Brothers will wage war against one another and become each other's slayers, and *sisters' children* will break the bonds of kinship. *Systrungar* means son of the mother's sister, and in the poet's eyes, the repudiation by such of blood relationship caps the climax of the crime of fratricide. The climax lies in *systrungar*, which emphasizes the kinship on the maternal side. If the term *syskina-börn*, brother's and sister's children, or *syskina-synir*, brother's and sister's sons, had been used, the second line would not have been a crescendo as

<sup>1</sup> The Greeks know only in the mythology of the Heroic Age the special intimacy of the bond between the maternal uncle and his nephew, a relic of mother right found among many peoples. According to Diodorus, IV, 34, Meleager kills the sons of Thestius, the brothers of his mother Althea. The latter regards this deed as such a heinous crime that she curses the murderer, her own son, and prays for his death. It is related that "the gods fulfilled her wish and ended Meleager's life." According to the same author (Diodorus, IV, 44), the Argonauts under Herakles landed in Thracia and there found that Phineus, at the instigation of his second wife, shamefully maltreats his two sons by his first, deserted wife, Cleopatra, the Boread. But among the Argonauts there are also some Boreades, the brothers of Cleopatra, the maternal uncles, therefore, of the maltreated boys. They at once come to their nephews' aid, set them free and kill their guards. [Note by Engels.]

against the first but a weakening *diminuendo*. Thus, even in the time of the Vikings, when the *Völuspá* was composed, the memory of mother right was not yet obliterated in Scandinavia.

For the rest, in Tacitus' time, at least among the Germans with whom he was more familiar, mother right had already given way to father right: the children were the heirs of the father; in the absence of children, the brothers and the paternal and maternal uncles were the heirs. The admission of the mother's brother to inheritance is connected with the preservation of the above-mentioned custom, and also proves how recent father right was among the Germans at that time. We find traces of mother right even late in the Middle Ages. In this period fatherhood was still a matter of doubt, especially among serfs, and when a feudal lord demanded the return of a fugitive serf from a city, it was required, for instance, in Augsburg, Basel and Kaiserslautern, that the fact of his serfdom should be established by the oaths of six of his immediate blood relatives, exclusively on his mother's side. (Maurer, *Urban Constitution*, I,<sup>1</sup> p. 381.)

Another relic of mother right, then beginning to fall into decay, was the, from the Roman standpoint almost inexplicable, respect the Germans had for the female sex. Girls of noble family were regarded as the best hostages guaranteeing the keeping of contracts with Germans. In battle, nothing stimulated their courage so much as the horrible thought that their wives and daughters might be captured and carried into slavery. They regarded the woman as being holy and something of a prophetess, and they heeded her advice in the most important matters. Velea, the Bructerian priestess on the Lippe River, was the moving spirit of the whole Batavian insurrection, in which Civilis, at the head of Germans and Belgians, shook the foundations of Roman rule in Gaul. The women appear to have held undisputed sway in the house. Tacitus says that they, with the old men and children, had, of course, to do all the work, for the men went hunting, drank and loafed; but he does not say who cultivated the fields, and as according to his explicit statement the slaves only paid dues and performed no compulsory labour, it would appear that what little agricultural work was required had to be performed by the bulk of the adult men.

As was stated above, the form of marriage was the pairing family gradually approximating to monogamy. It was not yet strict monogamy, for polygamy was permitted to the notability. On the whole (unlike the Celts) they insisted on strict chastity among girls.

<sup>1</sup> G. L. Maurer, *Geschichte der Städteverfassung in Deutschland*. Bd. I-IV. Erlangen 1869-71.—Ed.



Tacitus speaks with particular warmth of the inviolability of the matrimonial bond among the Germans. He gives adultery on the part of the woman as the sole reason for a divorce. But his report contains many gaps here, and furthermore, it too openly holds up the mirror of virtue to the dissipated Romans. So much is certain: if the Germans in their forests were such exceptional models of virtue, only a slight contact with the outer world was required to bring them down to the level of the other, average, Europeans. In the whirl of Roman life the last trace of strict morality disappeared even faster than the German language. It is enough to read Gregory of Tours. It goes without saying that refined voluptuousness could not exist in the primeval forests of Germany as it did in Rome, and so in this respect also the Germans were superior enough to the Roman world without ascribing to them a continence in carnal matters that has never prevailed among any people as a whole.

From the gentile system arose the obligation to inherit the feuds as well as the friendships of one's father and relatives; and also *wergild*, the fine paid in atonement for murder or injury, in place of blood revenge. A generation ago this *wergild* was regarded as a specifically German institution, but it has since been proved that hundreds of peoples practised this milder form of blood revenge which had its origin in the gentile system. Like the obligation of hospitality, it is found, for instance, among the American Indians. Tacitus' description of the manner in which hospitality was observed (*Germania*, c. 21) is almost identical, even in details, with Morgan's relating to his Indians.

The heated and ceaseless controversy as to whether or not the Germans in Tacitus' time had already finally divided up the cultivated land and how the pertinent passages should be interpreted is now a thing of the past. After it had been established that the cultivated land of nearly all peoples was tilled in common by the gens and later on by communistic family communities, a practice which Caesar still found among the Suevi; that later the land was allotted and periodically reallotted to the individual families; and that this periodical reallotment of the cultivated land has been preserved in parts of Germany down to this day, we need not waste any more breath on the subject. If the Germans in one hundred and fifty years passed from common cultivation, such as Caesar expressly attributes to the Suevi—they have no divided or private tillage whatsoever, he says—to individual cultivation with the annual redistribution of the land in Tacitus' time, it is surely progress enough; a transition from that stage to the complete private ownership of land in such a short period and without any outside intervention was an utter impossibility. Hence I can read in Tacitus

only what he states in so many words: They change (or redivide) the cultivated land every year, and enough common land is left in the process. It is the stage of agriculture and appropriation of the soil which exactly tallies with the gentile constitution of the Germans of that time.

I leave the preceding paragraph unchanged, just as it stood in former editions. Meantime the question has assumed another aspect. Since Kovalevsky has demonstrated (see above, p. 44<sup>1</sup>) that the patriarchal household community was widespread, if not universal, as the connecting link between the mother-right communistic family and the modern isolated family, the question is no longer whether the land was common or private property, as was still discussed between Maurer and Waitz, but what *form* common property assumed. There is no doubt whatever that in Caesar's time the Suevi not only owned their land in common, but also tilled it in common for common account. The questions whether their economic unit was the gens or the household community or an intermediate communistic kinship group, or whether all three of these groups existed as a result of different local land conditions will remain subjects of controversy for a long time yet. Kovalevsky maintains that the conditions described by Tacitus were not predicated on the mark or village community, but on the household community, which, much later, developed into the village community, owing to the growth of the population.

Hence, it is claimed, the German settlements on the territory they occupied in the time of the Romans, and on the territory they later took from the Romans, must have been not villages, but large family communities comprising several generations, which cultivated a correspondingly large tract of land and used the surrounding wild land as a common mark with their neighbours. The passage in Tacitus concerning the changing of the cultivated land would then actually have an agronomic meaning, namely, that the community cultivated a different piece of land every year, and the land cultivated during the previous year was left fallow or entirely abandoned. The sparsity of the population would have left enough spare wild land to make all disputes about land unnecessary. Only after the lapse of centuries, when the members of the household had increased to such an extent that common cultivation became impossible under prevailing conditions of production, did the household communities allegedly dissolve. The former common fields and meadows were then divided in the well-known manner among

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<sup>1</sup> The page indicated by Engels is that of the fourth German edition. See pp. 198-99 of this volume.—*Ed.*

the various individual households that had now formed, at first periodically, and later once for all, while forests, pastures and bodies of water remained common property.

As far as Russia is concerned, this process of development appears to have been fully proved historically. As for Germany, and secondarily, for other Germanic countries, it cannot be denied that, in many respects, this view affords a better interpretation of the sources and an easier solution of difficulties than the former idea of tracing the village community down to the time of Tacitus. The oldest documents, for instance, the *Codex Laurehamensis*,<sup>1</sup> are on the whole more easily explained by the household community than by the village mark community. On the other hand, it presents new difficulties and new problems that need solution. Here, only further investigation can decide. I cannot deny, however, that it is highly probable that the household community was also the intermediate stage in Germany, Scandinavia and England.

While the Germans of Caesar's time had partly just taken up settled abodes, and partly were still seeking such, they had been settled for a full century in Tacitus' time; the resulting progress in the production of means of subsistence is unmistakable. They lived in log houses; their clothing was still of the primitive forest type, consisting of rough woollen cloaks and animal skins, and linen underclothing for the women and the notables. They lived on milk, meat, wild fruit and, as Pliny adds, oatmeal porridge (the Celtic national dish in Ireland and Scotland to this day). Their wealth consisted of cattle, of an inferior breed, however, the animals being small, uncouth and hornless; the horses were small ponies, not fast runners. Money, Roman coin only, was little and rarely used. They made no gold or silver ware, nor did they attach any value to these metals. Iron was scarce and, at least among the tribes on the Rhine and the Danube, was apparently almost wholly imported, not mined by themselves. The runic script (imitations of Greek and Latin letters) was only used as a secret code and exclusively for religious sorcery. Human sacrifices were still in vogue. In short, they were a people just emerged from the middle stage of barbarism into the upper stage. While, however, the tribes whose immediate contact with the Romans facilitated the import of Roman industrial products were thereby prevented from developing a metal and textile industry of their own, there is not the least doubt that the tribes of the North-east, on the Baltic, developed these industries. The pieces of armour found in the bogs of Schleswig—a long iron sword, a coat of mail, a silver helmet, etc., together with Roman coins from the close of

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<sup>1</sup> *Codex Laurehamensis*: Land register of the city of Lorch.—Ed.

the second century—and the German metal ware spread by the migration of peoples represent a peculiar type of fine workmanship, even such as were modeled after Roman originals. With the exception of England, emigration to the civilized Roman Empire everywhere put an end to this native industry. How uniformly this industry arose and developed is shown, for instance, by the bronze spangles. The specimens found in Burgundy, in Rumania and along the Azov Sea might have been produced in the very same workshop as the British and the Swedish, and are likewise of undoubtedly Germanic origin.

Their constitution was also in keeping with the upper stage of barbarism. According to Tacitus, there was commonly a council of chiefs (*principes*) which decided matters of minor importance and prepared important matters for the decision of the popular assembly. The latter, in the lower stage of barbarism, at least in places where we know it, among the Americans, was held only in the gens, not yet in the tribe or the confederacy of tribes. The council chiefs (*principes*) were still sharply distinguished from the war chiefs (*duces*), just as among the Iroquois. The former were already living, in part, on honorary gifts, such as cattle, grain, etc., from their fellow tribesmen. As in America, they were generally elected from the same family. The transition to father right favoured, as in Greece and Rome, the gradual transformation of elective office into hereditary office, thus giving rise to a noble family in each gens. Most of this old, so-called tribal, nobility disappeared during the migration of peoples, or shortly after. The military leaders were elected solely on their merits, irrespective of birth. They had little power and had to rely on force of example. As Tacitus explicitly states, actual disciplinary power in the army was held by the priests. The popular assembly was the real power. The king or tribal chief presided; the people decided: a murmur signified "no," acclamation and clanging of weapons meant "aye." The popular assembly was also the court of justice. Complaints were brought up here and decided; and death sentences were pronounced, the latter only in cases of cowardice, treason or unnatural vices. The gentes and other subdivisions also judged in a body, presided over by the chief, who, as in all original German courts, could be only director of the proceedings and questioner. Among the Germans, always and everywhere, sentence was pronounced by the entire community.

Confederacies of tribes came into existence from Cæsar's time. Some of them already had kings. The supreme military commander began to aspire to despotic power, as among the Greeks and Romans, and sometimes succeeded in achieving it. These successful usurpers

were by no means absolute rulers; nevertheless, they began to break the fetters of the gentile constitution. While freed slaves generally occupied an inferior position, because they could not be members of any gens, they often gained rank, wealth and honours as favourites of the new kings. The same occurred after the conquest of the Roman Empire in the case of the military leaders who had now become kings of large countries. Among the Franks, the king's slaves and freedmen played a great role first at court and then in the state; a large part of the new aristocracy was descended from them.

There was one institution that especially favoured the rise of royalty: the retinue. We have already seen how among the American Redskins private associations were formed alongside of the gens for the purpose of waging war on their own. Among the Germans, these private associations had developed into standing bodies. The military commander who had acquired fame gathered around his person a host of booty-loving young warriors pledged to loyalty to him personally, as he was to them. He fed them, gave them gifts and organized them on hierarchical principles: a bodyguard and a troop ready for immediate action in short expeditions, a trained corps of officers for larger campaigns. Weak as these retinues must have been, as indeed they proved to be later, for example, under Odoacer in Italy, they, nevertheless, served as the germ of decay of the old popular liberties, and proved to be such during and after the migration of peoples. Because, first, they created favourable soil for the rise of the royal power. Secondly, as Tacitus observed, they could be held together only by continuous warfare and plundering expeditions. Loot became the main object. If the chieftain found nothing to do in his neighbourhood, he marched his troops to other countries, where there was war and the prospect of booty. The German auxiliaries, who under the Roman standard even fought Germans in large numbers, partly consisted of such retinues. They were the first germs of the Landsknecht<sup>1</sup> system the shame and curse of the Germans. After the conquest of the Roman Empire, these kings' retainers, together with the bonded and the Roman court attendants, formed the second main constituent part of the nobility of later days.

In general, then, the German tribes, combined into peoples, had the same constitution that had developed among the Greeks of the Heroic Age and among the Romans at the time of the so-called kings: popular assemblies, councils of gentile chiefs and military commanders who were already aspiring to real kingly power. It was the most highly developed constitution the gentile order could pro-

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<sup>1</sup> Mercenary soldiers.—*Ed.*

duce; it was the model constitution of the higher stage of barbarism. As soon as society passed beyond the limits for which this constitution sufficed, the gentile order was finished. It burst asunder and the state took its place.

## VIII

### THE FORMATION OF THE STATE AMONG THE GERMANS

According to Tacitus the Germans were a very numerous people. An approximate idea of the strength of the different German peoples is given by Caesar; he puts the number of Usipetans and Tencterans, who appeared on the left bank of the Rhine, at 180,000, including women and children. Thus, about 100,000 to a single people,<sup>1</sup> considerably more than, say, the Iroquois numbered in their most flourishing period, when not quite 20,000 became the terror of the whole country, from the Great Lakes to the Ohio and Potomac. If we were to attempt to group on a map the individual peoples of the Rhine country, who are better known to us from reports, we would find that such a people would occupy on the average the area of a Prussian administrative district, about 10,000 square kilometres, or 182 geographical square miles. The *Germania Magna*<sup>2</sup> of the Romans, reaching to the Vistula, comprised, however, roundly 500,000 square kilometres. Counting an average of 100,000 for any single people, the total population of *Germania Magna* would have amounted to five million—a rather high figure for a barbarian group of peoples, although 10 inhabitants to the square kilometre, or 550 to the geographical square mile, is very little when compared with present conditions. But this does not include all the Germans then living. We know that German peoples of Gothic origin, Bastarnians, Peukinians and others, lived along the Carpathian Mountains all the way down to the mouth of the Danube. They were so numerous that Pliny designated them as the fifth main tribe of the Germans; in 180 B. C. they were already serving as mercenaries of the Macedonian King Perseus, and in the first years of the reign of August-

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<sup>1</sup> The number taken here is confirmed by a passage in Diodorus on the Celts of Gaul: "In Gaul live numerous peoples of unequal strength. The biggest of them numbers about 200,000, the smallest 50,000." (Diodorus Siculus, V, 25.) That gives an average of 125,000. The individual Gallic peoples, being more highly developed, must certainly have been more numerous than the German. [Note by Engels.]

<sup>2</sup> *Germania Magna*: Greater Germany.—Ed.

tus they were still pushing their way as far as the vicinity of Adrianople. If we assume that they numbered only one million, then, at the beginning of the Christian era, the Germans numbered probably not less than six million.

After settling in Germany [*Germanien*], the population must have grown with increasing rapidity. The industrial progress mentioned above is sufficient to prove it. The objects found in the bogs of Schleswig, to judge by the Roman coins found with them, date from the third century. Hence at that time the metal and textile industry was already well developed on the Baltic, a lively trade was carried on with the Roman Empire, and the wealthier class enjoyed a certain luxury—all evidences of a greater density of population. At this time, however, the Germans started their general assault along the whole line of the Rhine, the Roman frontier rampart and the Danube, a line stretching from the North Sea to the Black Sea—direct proof of the ever-growing population striving outwards. During the three centuries of struggle, the whole main body of the Gothic peoples (with the exception of the Scandinavian Goths and the Burgundians) moved towards the Southeast and formed the left wing of the long line of attack; the High Germans (Herminonians) pushed forward in the centre of this line, on the Upper Danube, and the Istaeonians, now called Franks, on the right wing, along the Rhine. The conquest of Britain fell to the lot of the Ingaevonians. At the end of the fifth century the Roman Empire, exhausted, bloodless and helpless, lay open to the invading Germans.

In preceding chapters we stood at the cradle of ancient Greek and Roman civilization. Now we are standing at its grave. The levelling plane of Roman world power had been passing for centuries over all the Mediterranean countries. Where the Greek language offered no resistance all national languages gave way to a corrupt Latin. There were no longer any distinctions of nationality, no more Gauls, Iberians, Ligurians, Noricans; all had become Romans. Roman administration and Roman law had everywhere dissolved the old bodies of *consanguinei* and thus crushed the last remnants of local and national self-expression. The new-fangled Romanism could not compensate for this loss; it did not express any nationality, but only lack of nationality. The elements for the formation of new nations existed everywhere. The Latin dialects of the different provinces diverged more and more; the natural boundaries that had once made Italy, Gaul, Spain, Africa independent territories, still existed and still made themselves felt. Yet nowhere was there a force capable of combining these elements into new nations; nowhere was there the least trace of any capacity for development or any power of resistance, much less of creative power. The immense

human mass of that enormous territory was held together by one bond alone—the Roman state; and this, in time, had become their worst enemy and oppressor. The provinces had ruined Rome; Rome itself had become a provincial town like all the others, privileged, but no longer ruling, no longer the centre of the world empire, no longer even the seat of the emperors and vice-emperors, who lived in Constantinople, Treves and Milan. The Roman state had become an immense complicated machine, designed exclusively for the exploitation of its subjects. Taxes, services for the state and levies of all kinds drove the mass of the people deeper and deeper into poverty. The extortionate practices of the procurators, tax collectors and soldiers caused the pressure to become intolerable. This is what the Roman state with its world domination had brought things to: it had based its right to existence on the preservation of order in the interior and protection against the barbarians outside. But its order was worse than the worst disorder, and the barbarians, against whom the state pretended to protect its citizens, were hailed by them as saviours.

Social conditions were no less desperate. During the last years of the republic, Roman rule was already based on the ruthless exploitation of the conquered provinces. The emperors had not abolished this exploitation; on the contrary, they had regularized it. The more the empire fell into decay, the higher rose the taxes and compulsory services, and the more shamelessly the officials robbed and blackmailed the people. Commerce and industry were never the business of the Romans who lorded it over entire peoples. Only in usury did they excel all others, before and after them. The commerce that existed and managed to maintain itself for a time was reduced to ruin by official extortion; what survived was carried on in the eastern, Grecian part of the empire, but this is beyond the scope of our study. Universal impoverishment; decline of commerce, handicrafts, the arts, and of the population; decay of the towns; retrogression of agriculture to a lower stage—this was the final result of Roman world supremacy.

Agriculture, the decisive branch of production throughout antiquity, now became so more than ever. In Italy, the immense aggregations of estates (*latifundia*) which had covered nearly the whole territory since the end of the republic, had been utilized in two ways: either as pastures, on which the population had been replaced by sheep and oxen, the care of which required only a few slaves; or as country estates, on which large-scale horticulture had been carried on with masses of slaves, partly to serve the luxurious needs of the owners and partly for sale in the urban markets. The great pastures had been preserved and probably even



enlarged. But the country estates and their horticulture fell into ruin owing to the impoverishment of their owners and the decay of the towns. Latifundian economy based on slave labour was no longer profitable; but at that time it was the only possible form of large-scale agriculture. Small-scale farming again became the only profitable form. Estate after estate was parcelled out and leased in small lots to hereditary tenants, who paid a fixed sum, or to *partiarii*, farm managers rather than tenants, who received one-sixth or even only one-ninth of the year's product for their work. Mainly, however, these small plots were distributed to *coloni*, who paid a fixed amount annually, were attached to the land and could be sold together with the plots. These were not slaves, but neither were they free; they could not marry free citizens, and inter-marriage among themselves was not regarded as valid marriage, but as mere concubinage (*contubernium*), as in the case of the slaves. They were the forerunners of the medieval serfs.

The slavery of antiquity became obsolete. Neither in large-scale agriculture in the country, nor in the manufactories of the towns did it any longer bring in a return worth while—the market for its products had disappeared. Small-scale agriculture and small handicrafts, to which the gigantic production of the flourishing times of the empire was now reduced, had no room for numerous slaves. Society found room only for the domestic and luxury slaves of the rich. But moribund slavery was still sufficiently virile to make all productive work appear as slave labour, unworthy of the dignity of free Romans—and everybody was now a free Roman. On this account, on the one hand, there was an increase in the number of superfluous slaves who, having become a drag, were emancipated; on the other hand, there was an increase in the number of *coloni* and of beggared freemen (similar to the poor whites in the ex-slave states of America). Christianity is perfectly innocent of this gradual dying out of ancient slavery. It had partaken of the fruits of slavery in the Roman Empire for centuries, and later did nothing to prevent the slave trade of Christians, either of the Germans in the North, or of the Venetians on the Mediterranean, or the Negro slave trade of later years.<sup>1</sup> Slavery no longer paid, and so it died out; but dying slavery left behind its poisonous sting by branding as ignoble the productive work of the free. This was the blind alley in which the Roman world was caught: slavery was economically impossible,

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<sup>1</sup> According to Bishop Liutprand of Cremona, the principal industry of Verdun in the tenth century, that is, in the Holy German Empire, was the manufacture of eunuchs, who were exported with great profit to Spain for the harems of the Moors. [Note by Engels.]

while the labour of the free was under a moral ban. The one could no longer, the other could not yet, be the basic form of social production. Only a complete revolution could be of help here.

Things were no better in the provinces. Most of the reports we have concern Gaul. By the side of the *coloni*, free small peasants still existed there. In order to protect themselves against the brutal extortions of the officials, judges and usurers, they frequently placed themselves under the protection, the patronage, of men possessed of power; and they did this not only singly, but in whole communities, so much so that the emperors of the fourth century often issued decrees prohibiting this practice. How did this help those who sought this protection? The patron imposed the condition that they transfer the title of their lands to him, and in return he ensured them the usufruct of their land for life—a trick which the Holy Church remembered and freely imitated during the ninth and tenth centuries, for the greater glory of God and the enlargement of its own landed possessions. At that time, however, about the year 475, Bishop Salvianus of Marseilles still vehemently denounced such robbery and related that the oppression of the Roman officials and great landlords became so intolerable that many "Romans" fled to the districts already occupied by the barbarians, and the Roman citizens who had settled there feared nothing so much as falling under Roman rule again. That poor parents frequently sold their children into slavery in those days is proved by a law forbidding this practice.

In return for liberating the Romans from their own state, the German barbarians appropriated two-thirds of the entire land and divided it among themselves. The division was made in accordance with the gentile system; as the conquerors were relatively small in number, large tracts remained, undivided, partly in the possession of the whole people and partly in that of the tribes or gentes. In each gens fields and pastures were distributed among the individual households in equal shares by lot. We do not know whether repeated redivisions took place at that time; at all events, this practice was soon discarded in the Roman provinces, and the individual allotment became alienable private property, *allodium*. Forests and pastures remained undivided for common use; this use and the mode of cultivating the divided land was regulated by ancient custom and the will of the entire community. The longer the gens existed in its village, and the more Germans and Romans merged in the course of time, the more the consanguineous character of the ties retreated before territorial ties. The gens disappeared in the mark community, in which, however, sufficient traces of the original kinship of the members were visible. Thus, the gentile

constitution, at least in those countries where mark communes were preserved—in the North of France, in England, Germany and Scandinavia—was imperceptibly transformed into a territorial constitution, and thus became capable of being fitted into the state. Nevertheless, it retained the natural democratic character which distinguishes the whole gentile order, and thus preserved a piece of the gentile constitution even in its degeneration, forced upon it in later times, thereby leaving a weapon in the hands of the oppressed, ready to be wielded even in modern times.

The rapid disappearance of the blood tie in the gens was due to the fact that its organs in the tribe and the whole people had also degenerated as a result of the conquest. We know that rule over subjugated people is incompatible with the gentile order. Here we see it on a large scale. The German peoples, masters of the Roman provinces, had to organize their conquest; but one could neither absorb the mass of the Romans into the gentile bodies nor rule them with the aid of the latter. A substitute for the Roman state had to be placed at the head of the Roman local administrative bodies, which at first largely continued to function, and this substitute could only be another state. Thus, the organs of the gentile constitution had to be transformed into organs of state, and owing to the pressure of circumstances, this had to be done very quickly. The first representative of the conquering people was, however, the military commander. The internal and external safety of the conquered territory demanded that his power be increased. The moment had arrived for transforming military leadership into kingship. This was done.

Let us take the kingdom of the Franks. Here, not only the wide dominions of the Roman state, but also all the very large tracts of land that had not been assigned to the large and small *gau* and mark communities, especially all the large forests, fell into the hands of the victorious Salian people as their unrestricted possession. The first thing the king of the Franks, transformed from an ordinary military commander into a real monarch, did was to convert this property of the people into a royal estate, to steal it from the people and to donate or grant it in fief to his retainers. This retinue, originally composed of his personal military retainers and the rest of the subcommanders of the army, was soon augmented not only by Romans, that is, Romanized Gauls, who quickly became almost indispensable to him owing to their knowledge of writing, their education and familiarity with the Romance vernacular and literary Latin as well as with the laws of the land, but also by slaves, serfs and freedmen, who constituted his Court and from among whom he chose his favourites. All these were granted tracts of public

land, first mostly as gifts and later in the form of benefices<sup>1</sup>—originally in most cases for the period of the life of the king—and so the basis was laid for a new nobility at the expense of the people.

But this was not all. The far-flung empire could not be governed by means of the old gentile constitution. The council of chiefs, even if it had not long become obsolete, could not have assembled and was soon replaced by the king's permanent retinue. The old popular assembly was still ostensibly preserved, but more and more as an assembly of the subcommanders of the army and the newly-rising notables. The free land-owning peasants, the mass of the Frankish people, were exhausted and reduced to penury by continuous civil war and wars of conquest, the latter particularly under Charlemagne, just as the Roman peasants had been during the last period of the republic. These peasants, who originally had formed the whole army, and after the conquest of the Frankish lands had been its core, were so impoverished at the beginning of the ninth century that scarcely one out of five could provide the accoutrements of war. The former army of free peasants, called up directly by the king, was replaced by an army composed of the servitors of the newly-arisen magnates. Among these servitors were also villeins, the descendants of the peasants who formerly had acknowledged no master but the king, and a little earlier had acknowledged no master at all, not even a king. Under Charlemagne's successors the ruin of the Frankish peasantry was completed by internal wars, the weakness of the royal power and corresponding usurpations of the magnates, whose ranks were augmented by the *gau* counts, established by Charlemagne and eager to make their office hereditary, and finally by the incursions of the Normans. Fifty years after the death of Charlemagne, the Frankish Empire lay as helpless at the feet of the Normans as four hundred years previously the Roman Empire had lain at the feet of the Franks.

Not only the external impotence, but the internal order, or rather disorder, of society, was almost the same. The free Frankish peasants found themselves in a position similar to that of their predecessors, the Roman *coloni*. Ruined by war and plunder, they had to seek the protection of the new magnates or the Church, for the royal power was too weak to protect them; but they had to pay dear for this protection. Like the Gallic peasants before them, they had to transfer the property in their land to their patrons, and received it back from them as tenants in different and varying forms, but

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<sup>1</sup> *Benefices*: Grants of land bestowed by the Frankish kings as reward upon members of their retinues.—*Ed.*

always on condition of performing services and paying dues. Once driven into this form of dependence, they gradually lost their personal freedom; after a few generations most of them became serfs. How rapidly the free peasants were degraded is shown by Irminon's land records of the Abbey Saint-Germain-des-Prés, then near, now in, Paris. Even during the life of Charlemagne, on the vast estates of this abbey, stretching into the surrounding country, there were 2,788 households, nearly all Franks with German names; 2,080 of them were *coloni*, 35 *liti*, 220 slaves and only 8 freeholders! The custom by which the patron had the land of the peasants transferred to himself, giving to them only the usufruct of it for life, the custom denounced as ungodly by Salvianus, was now universally practised by the Church in its dealings with the peasants. Feudal servitude, now coming more and more into vogue, was modelled as much on the lines of the Roman *angariae*, compulsory services for the state, as on the services rendered by the members of the German mark in bridge and road building and other work for common purposes. Thus, it looked as if, after four hundred years, the mass of the population had come back to the point it had started from.

This proved only two things, however: First, that the social stratification and the distribution of property in the declining Roman Empire corresponded entirely to the then prevailing stage of production in agriculture and industry, and hence was unavoidable; secondly, that this stage of production had not sunk or risen to any material extent in the course of the following four hundred years, and, therefore, had necessarily produced the same distribution of property and the same class division of population. During the last centuries of the Roman Empire, the town lost its supremacy over the country, and did not regain it during the first centuries of German rule. This presupposes a low stage of agriculture, and of industry as well. Such a general condition necessarily gives rise to big ruling landowners and dependent small peasants. How almost impossible it was to graft either the Roman latifundian economy run with slave labour or the newer large-scale farming run with serf labour on to such a society, is proved by Charlemagne's very extensive experiments with his famous imperial estates, which passed away leaving hardly a trace. These experiments were continued only by the monasteries and were fruitful only for them; but the monasteries were abnormal social bodies founded on celibacy. They could do the exceptional, and for that very reason had to remain exceptions.

Nevertheless, progress was made during these four hundred years. Even if in the end we find almost the same main classes as in the beginning, still, the people who constituted these classes had

changed. The ancient slavery had disappeared; gone were also the beggared poor freemen, who had despised work as slavish. Between the Roman *colonus* and the new serf there had been the free Frankish peasant. The "useless reminiscences and vain strife" of doomed Romanism were dead and buried. The social classes of the ninth century had taken shape not in the bog of a declining civilization, but in the travail of a new. The new race, masters as well as servants, was a race of men compared with its Roman predecessors. The relation of powerful landlords and serving peasants, which for the latter had been the hopeless form of the decline of the world of antiquity, was now for the former the starting point of a new development. Moreover, unproductive as these four hundred years appear to have been, they, nevertheless, left *one* great product behind them: the modern nationalities, the refashioning and regrouping of West European humanity for impending history. The Germans, in fact, had infused new life into Europe; and that is why the dissolution of the states in the German period ended, not in Norse-Saracen subjugation, but in the development from the royal benefices and patronage (commendation) to feudalism, and in such a tremendous increase in the population that the drain of blood caused by the Crusades barely two centuries later could be borne without injury.

What was the mysterious charm with which the Germans infused new vitality into dying Europe? Was it the innate magic power of the German race, as our jingo historians would have it? By no means. Of course, the Germans were a highly gifted Aryan tribe, especially at that time, in full process of vigorous development. It was not their specific national qualities that rejuvenated Europe, however, but simply—their barbarism, their gentile constitution.

Their personal efficiency and bravery, their love of liberty, and their democratic instinct, which regarded all public affairs as its own affairs, in short, all those qualities which the Romans had lost and which were alone capable of forming new states and of raising new nationalities out of the muck of the Roman world—what were they but the characteristic features of barbarians in the upper stage, fruits of their gentile constitution?

If they transformed the ancient form of monogamy, moderated male rule in the family and gave a higher status to women than the classic world had ever known, what enabled them to do so if not their barbarism, their gentile customs, their still living heritage of the time of mother right?

If they were able in at least three of the most important countries—Germany, Northern France and England—to preserve and carry over to the feudal state a piece of the genuine gentile consti-

tution in the form of the mark communities, and thus give to the oppressed class, the peasants, even under the hardest conditions of medieval serfdom, local cohesion and the means of resistance which neither the slaves of antiquity nor the modern proletarians found ready at hand—to what did they owe this if not to their barbarism, their exclusively barbarian mode of settling in gentes?

And lastly, if they were able to develop and universally introduce the milder form of servitude which they had been practising at home, and which more and more displaced slavery also in the Roman Empire—a form which, as Fourier first emphasized, gave to the oppressed the means of gradual emancipation *as a class* (*fournit aux cultivateurs des moyens d'affranchissement collectif et progressif*) and is therefore far superior to slavery, which permits only of the immediate manumission of the individual without any transitory stage (antiquity did not know any abolition of slavery by a victorious rebellion), whereas the serfs of the Middle Ages, step by step, achieved their emancipation as a class—to what was this due if not their barbarism, thanks to which they had not yet arrived at complete slavery, either in the form of the ancient labour slavery or in that of the Oriental domestic slavery?

All that was vital and life-bringing in what the Germans infused into the Roman world was barbarism. In fact, only barbarians are capable of rejuvenating a world labouring in the throes of a dying civilization. And the highest stage of barbarism, to which and in which the Germans worked their way up previous to the migration of peoples, was precisely the most favourable one for this process. This explains everything.

## IX

### BARBARISM AND CIVILIZATION

We have traced the dissolution of the gentile order in the three great separate examples: Greek, Roman, and German. We shall investigate, in conclusion, the general economic conditions that had already undermined the gentile organization of society in the upper stage of barbarism and completely abolished it with the advent of civilization. For this, Marx's *Capital* will be as necessary as Morgan's book.

Growing out of the middle stage and developing further in the upper stage of savagery, the gens reached its prime, as far as our sources enable us to judge, in the lower stage of barbarism. With this stage, then, we shall begin our investigation.

At this stage, for which the American Indians must serve as our example, we find the gentile system fully developed. A tribe was divided up into several, in most cases two, gentes; with the increase of the population, these original gentes again divided into several daughter gentes, in relation to which the mother gens appeared as the phratry; the tribe itself split up into several tribes, in each of which, in most cases, we again find the old gentes. In some cases, at least, a confederacy united the kindred tribes. This simple organization was fully adequate for the social conditions from which it sprang. It was nothing more than a peculiar natural grouping, capable of smoothing out all internal conflicts likely to arise in a society organized on these lines. In the realm of the external, conflicts were settled by war, which could end in the annihilation of a tribe, but never in its subjugation. The grandeur and at the same time the limitation of the gentile order was that it found no place for rulers and ruled. In the realm of the internal, there was as yet no distinction between rights and duties; the question of whether participation in public affairs, blood revenge or atonement for injuries was a right or a duty never confronted the Indian; it would have appeared as absurd to him as the question of whether eating, sleeping or hunting was a right or a duty. Nor could any tribe or gens split up into different classes. This leads us to the investigation of the economic basis of those conditions.

The population was very sparse. It was dense only in the habitat of the tribe, surrounded by its wide hunting grounds and beyond these the neutral protective forest which separated it from other tribes. Division of labour was a pure and simple outgrowth of nature; it existed only between the two sexes. The men went to war, hunted, fished, provided the raw material for food and the tools necessary for these pursuits. The women cared for the house, and prepared food and clothing; they cooked, weaved and sewed. Each was master in his or her own field of activity; the men in the forest, the women in the house. Each owned the tools he or she made and used: the men, the weapons and the hunting and fishing tackle, the women, the household goods and utensils. The household was communistic, comprising several, and often many, families.<sup>1</sup> Whatever was produced and used in common was common property: the house, the garden, the long boat. Here, and only here, then, do we find the "earned property" which jurists and econom-

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<sup>1</sup> Especially on the Northwest coast of America; see Bancroft. Among the Haidas of the Queen Charlotte Islands some households gather as many as seven hundred members under one roof. Among the Nootkas, whole tribes lived under one roof. [*Note by Engels.*]



ists have falsely attributed to civilized society, the last mendacious legal pretext on which modern capitalist property rests.

But man did not everywhere remain in this stage. In Asia he found animals that could be domesticated and propagated in captivity. The wild buffalo cow had to be hunted down; the domestic cow gave birth to a calf once a year, and also provided milk. A number of the most advanced tribes—Aryans, Semites, perhaps also the Turanians—made the domestication, and later the raising and tending of cattle, their principal occupation. Pastoral tribes separated themselves from the general mass of the barbarians: *first great social division of labour*. These pastoral tribes not only produced more articles of food, but also a greater variety than the rest of the barbarians. They not only had milk, milk products and meat in greater abundance than the others, but also skins, wool, goat's hair, and the spun and woven fabrics which the increasing quantities of the raw material brought into commoner use. This, for the first time, made regular exchange possible. At the preceding stages, exchange could only take place occasionally; exceptional ability in the making of weapons and tools may have led to a transient division of labour. Thus, unquestionable remains of workshops for stone implements of the neolithic period have been found in many places. The artificers who developed their ability in those workshops most probably worked for the community, as the permanent handicraftsmen of the Indian gentile communities still do. At any rate, no other exchange than that within the tribe could arise in that stage, and even that was an exception. After the crystallization of the pastoral tribes, however, we find here all the conditions favourable for exchange between members of different tribes, and for its further development and consolidation as a regular institution. Originally, tribe exchanged with tribe through their respective gentile chiefs. When, however, the herds began to be converted into separate property, exchange between individuals predominated more and more, until eventually it became the sole form. The principal article which the pastoral tribes offered their neighbours for exchange was cattle; cattle became the commodity by which all other commodities were appraised, and was everywhere readily taken in exchange for other commodities—in short, cattle assumed the function of money and served as money already at this stage. Such was the necessity and rapidity with which the demand for a money commodity developed at the very beginning of commodity exchange.

Horticulture, probably unknown to the Asiatic barbarians of the lower stage, arose, among them, at the latest, at the middle stage, as the forerunner of field agriculture. The climate of the Turanian Highlands does not admit of a pastoral life without a supply of

fodder for the long and severe winter. Hence, the cultivation of meadows and grain was here indispensable. The same is true of the steppes north of the Black Sea. Once grain was grown for cattle, it soon became human food. The cultivated land still remained tribal property and was assigned first to the gens, which, later, in its turn distributed it to the household communities for their use, and finally to individuals; these may have had certain rights of possession, but no more.

Of the industrial achievements of this stage two are particularly important. The first is the weaving loom, the second the smelting of metal ore and the working up of metals. Copper, tin, and their alloy, bronze, were by far the most important; bronze furnished useful tools and weapons, but could not displace stone implements. Only iron could do that, but its production was as yet unknown. Gold and silver began to be used for ornament and decoration, and must already have been of far higher value than copper and bronze.

The increase of production in all branches—cattle breeding, agriculture, domestic handicrafts—enabled human labour power to produce more than was necessary for its maintenance. At the same time, it increased the amount of work that daily fell to the lot of every member of the gens or household community or single family. The addition of more labour power became desirable. This was furnished by war; captives were made slaves. Under the given general historical conditions, the first great social division of labour, by increasing the productivity of labour, that is, wealth, and enlarging the field of production, necessarily carried slavery in its wake. Out of the first great social division of labour arose the first great division of society, into two classes: masters and slaves, exploiters and exploited.

How and when the herds and flocks were converted from the common property of the tribe or gens into the property of the individual heads of families we do not know to this day; but it must have occurred, in the main, at this stage. The herds and the other new objects of wealth brought about a revolution in the family. Gaining a livelihood had always been the business of the man; he produced and owned the means therefor. The herds were the new means of gaining a livelihood, and their original domestication and subsequent tending was his work. Hence, he owned the cattle, and the commodities and slaves obtained in exchange for them. All the surplus now resulting from production fell to the man; the woman shared in consuming it, but she had no share in owning it. The "savage" warrior and hunter had been content to occupy second place in the house and give precedence to the woman.

The "gentler" shepherd, presuming upon his wealth, pushed forward to first place and forced the woman into second place. And she could not complain. Division of labour in the family had regulated the distribution of property between man and wife. This division of labour remained unchanged, and yet it now put the former domestic relationship topsy-turvy simply because the division of labour outside the family had changed. The very cause that had formerly made the woman supreme in the house, namely, her being confined to domestic work, now assured supremacy in the house for the man: the woman's housework lost its significance compared with the man's work in obtaining a livelihood; the latter was everything, the former an insignificant contribution. Here we see already that the emancipation of women and their equality with men are impossible and must remain so as long as women are excluded from socially productive work and restricted to housework, which is private. The emancipation of women becomes possible only when women are enabled to take part in production on a large, social scale, and when domestic duties require their attention only to a minor degree. And this has become possible only as a result of modern large-scale industry, which not only permits of the participation of women in production in large numbers, but actually calls for it and, moreover, strives to convert private domestic work also into a public industry.

His achievement of actual supremacy in the house threw down the last barrier to the man's autocracy. This autocracy was confirmed and perpetuated by the overthrow of mother right, the introduction of father right and the gradual transition from the pairing family to monogamy. This made a breach in the old gentile order: the monogamian family became a power and rose threateningly against the gens.

The next step brings us to the upper stage of barbarism, the period in which all civilized peoples passed through their Heroic Age: it is the period of the iron sword, but also of the iron ploughshare and axe. Iron became the servant of man, the last and most important of all raw materials that played a revolutionary role in history, the last—if we except the potato. Iron made possible field agriculture on a larger scale and the clearing of extensive forest tracts for cultivation; it gave the craftsman a tool of such hardness and sharpness that no stone, no other known metal, could withstand it. All this came about gradually; the first iron produced was often softer than bronze. Thus, stone weapons disappeared but slowly; stone axes were still used in battle not only in the Hildebrand Song, but also at the battle of Hastings, in 1066. But progress was now irresistible, less interrupted and more rapid. The town, inclosing

houses of stone or brick within its turreted and crenelated stone walls, became the central seat of the tribe or confederacy of tribes. It marked rapid progress in the art of building; but it was also a symptom of increased danger and need for protection. Wealth increased rapidly, but it was the wealth of single individuals. Weaving, metal working and the other crafts that were becoming more and more specialized displayed increasing variety and artistic finish in their products; agriculture now provided not only cereals, leguminous plants and fruit, but also oil and wine, the preparation of which had now been learned. Such diverse activities could no longer be conducted by any single individual; *the second great division of labour* took place: handicrafts separated from agriculture. The continued increase of production and with it the increased productivity of labour enhanced the value of human labour power. Slavery, which had been a nascent and sporadic factor in the preceding stage, now became an essential part of the social system. The slaves ceased to be simply assistants, they were now driven in scores to work in the fields and workshops. The division of production into two great branches, agriculture and handicrafts, gave rise to production for exchange, the production of commodities; and with it came trade, not only in the interior and on the tribal boundaries, but also overseas. All this was still very undeveloped; the precious metals gained preference as the universal money commodity, but it was not yet minted and was exchanged merely by bare weight.

The distinction between rich and poor was added to that between freemen and slaves—with the new division of labour came a new division of society into classes. The differences in the wealth of the various heads of families caused the old communistic household communities to break up wherever they had still been preserved; and this put an end to the common cultivation of the soil for the account of the community. The cultivated land was assigned for use to the several families, first for a limited time and later in perpetuity; the transition to complete private ownership was accomplished gradually and simultaneously with the transition from the pairing family to monogamy. The individual family began to be the economic unit of society.

The increased density of the population necessitated closer union internally and externally. Everywhere the federation of kindred tribes became a necessity, and soon after, their amalgamation; and thence the amalgamation of the separate tribal territories into a single territory of the people. The military commander—*rex*, *basileus*, *thiudans*—became an indispensable and permanent official. The popular assembly was instituted wherever it did not

yet exist. The military commander, the council and the popular assembly formed the organs of the military democracy into which gentile society had developed. A military democracy—because war and organization for war were now regular functions of the life of the people. The wealth of their neighbours excited the greed of the peoples who began to regard the acquisition of wealth as one of the main purposes in life. They were barbarians: plunder appeared to them easier and even more honourable than productive work. War, once waged simply to avenge aggression or as a means of enlarging territory that had become inadequate, was now waged for the sake of plunder alone, and became a regular profession. It was not for nothing that formidable walls were reared around the new fortified towns: their yawning moats were the graves of the gentile constitution, and their turrets already reached up into civilization. Internal affairs underwent a similar change. The robber wars increased the power of the supreme military commander as well as of the subcommanders. The customary election of successors from one family, especially after the introduction of father right, was gradually transformed into hereditary succession, first tolerated, then claimed and finally usurped; the foundation of hereditary royalty and hereditary nobility was laid. In this manner the organs of the gentile constitution were gradually torn from their roots in the people, in gens, phratry and tribe, and the whole gentile order was transformed into its opposite: from an organization of tribes for the free administration of their own affairs it became an organization for plundering and oppressing their neighbours; and correspondingly, its organs were transformed from instruments of the will of the people into independent organs for ruling and oppressing their own people. This could not have happened had not the greed for wealth divided the members of the gentes into rich and poor; had not "property differences in a gens changed the community of interest into antagonism between members of a gens" (Marx.); and had not the growth of slavery already begun to brand working for a living as slavish and more ignominious than engaging in plunder.

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This brings us to the threshold of civilization. This stage is inaugurated by further progress in division of labour. In the lowest stage men produced only for their own direct needs; exchange was confined to sporadic cases when a surplus was accidentally obtained. In the middle stage of barbarism we find that the pastoral peoples had in their cattle a form of property which, with sufficiently large herds and flocks, regularly provided a surplus over and above their needs; and we also find a division of labour between the pasto-

ral peoples and backward tribes without herds, so that there were two different stages of production side by side, which created the conditions for regular exchange. The upper stage of barbarism introduced a further division of labour, between agriculture and handicrafts, resulting in the production of a continually increasing portion of commodities especially for exchange, so that exchange between individual producers reached the point where it became a vital necessity for society. Civilization strengthened and increased all the established divisions of labour, particularly by intensifying the contrast between town and country (either the town exercising economic supremacy over the country, as in antiquity, or the country over the town, as in the Middle Ages) and added a third division of labour, peculiar to itself and of decisive importance: it created a class that took no part in production, but engaged exclusively in exchanging products—the *merchants*. All previous inchoative formations of classes were exclusively connected with production; they divided those engaged in production into managers and performers, or into producers on a large scale and producers on a small scale. Here a class appears for the first time which, without taking any part in production, captures the management of production as a whole and economically subjugates the producers to its rule; a class that makes itself the indispensable intermediary between sets of two producers each and exploits them both. On the pretext of saving the producers the trouble and risk of exchange, of finding distant markets for their products, and of thus becoming the most useful class in society, a class of parasites arises, genuine social sycophants, who, as a reward for very insignificant real services, skim the cream off production at home and abroad, rapidly amass enormous wealth and corresponding social influence, and for this very reason are destined to reap ever new honours and gain increasing control over production during the period of civilization, until they at last create a product of their own—periodic commercial crises.

At the stage of development we are discussing, the young merchant class had no inkling as yet of the big things that were in store for it. But it took shape and made itself indispensable, and that was sufficient. With it, however, *metal money*, minted coins, came into use, and with this a new means by which the non-producer could rule the producer and his products. The commodity of commodities, which conceals within itself all other commodities, was discovered; the charm that can transform itself at will into anything desirable and desired. Whoever possessed it ruled the world of production; and who had it above all others? The merchant. In his hands the cult of money was safe. He took care to make it plain that all commodi-

ties, and hence all commodity producers, must grovel in the dust before money. He proved in practice that all other forms of wealth were mere semblances compared with this incarnation of wealth as such. Never again has the power of money revealed itself with such primitive crudity and violence as it did in this period of its youth. After the sale of commodities for money came the lending of money, entailing interest and usury. And no legislation of any later period throws the debtor so pitilessly and helplessly at the feet of the usurious creditor as that of ancient Athens and Rome—both sets of law spontaneous products, common law, arisen without other than economic compulsion.

Besides wealth in commodities and slaves, besides money wealth, wealth in the form of land came into being. The titles of individuals to parcels of land originally assigned to them by the gens or tribe were now so well established that these parcels became their hereditary property. The thing they had been striving for most just before that time was liberation from the claim of the gentile community to their parcels of land, a claim which had become a fetter for them. They were freed from this fetter—but soon after also from their new landed property. The full, free ownership of land implied not only possibility of unrestricted and uncurtailed possession, but also possibility of alienating it. As long as the land belonged to the gens there was no such possibility. But when the new landowner shook off the chains of the paramount title of the gens and tribe, he also tore the bond that had so long tied him inseparably to the soil. What that meant was made plain to him by the money invented simultaneously with the advent of private property in land. Land could now become a commodity which could be sold and pledged. Hardly had the private ownership of land been introduced when mortgage was discovered (see Athens). Just as hetæism and prostitution clung to the heels of monogamy, so from now on mortgage clung to the ownership of land. You clamoured for free, full, alienable ownership of land. Well, here you have it—*tu l'as voulu*,<sup>1</sup> Georges Dandin!

Commercial expansion, money, usury, landed property and mortgage were thus accompanied by the rapid concentration and centralization of wealth in the hands of a small class, on the one hand, and by the increasing impoverishment of the masses and a growing mass of paupers, on the other. The new aristocracy of wealth, in so far as it did not from the outset coincide with the old tribal nobility, forced the latter permanently into the background (in Athens, in Rome, among the Germans). And this division of free men into classes ac-

<sup>1</sup> You wanted it.—Ed.

cording to their wealth was accompanied, especially in Greece, by an enormous increase in the number of slaves,<sup>1</sup> whose forced labour formed the basis on which the superstructure of all society was reared.

Let us now see what became of the gentile constitution as a result of this social revolution. It stood powerless in face of the new elements that had grown up without its aid. It was dependent on the condition that the members of a gens, or, say, of a tribe, should live together in the same territory, be its sole inhabitants. This had long ceased to be the case. Gentes and tribes were everywhere commingled; everywhere slaves, dependents and foreigners lived among the citizens. The sedentary state, which had been acquired only towards the end of the middle stage of barbarism, was time and again interrupted by the mobility and changes of abode upon which commerce, changes of occupation and the transfer of land were conditioned. The members of the gentile organization could no longer meet for the purpose of attending to their common affairs; only matters of minor importance, such as religious ceremonies, were still observed, indifferently. Beside the wants and interests which the gentile organs were appointed and fitted to take care of, new wants and interests had arisen from the revolution in the conditions of earning one's living and the resulting change in social structure. These new wants and interests were not only alien to the old gentile order, but thwarted it in every way. The interests of the groups of craftsmen created by division of labour, and the special needs of the town as opposed to the country, required new organs; but each of these groups was composed of people from different gentes, phratries and tribes; they even included aliens. Hence, the new organs necessarily had to take form outside the gentile constitution, parallel with it, and that meant against it. And again, in every gentile organization the conflict of interests made itself felt and reached its apex by combining rich and poor, usurers and debtors, in the same gens and tribe. Then there was the mass of new inhabitants, strangers to the gentile associations, which, as in Rome, could become a power in the land, and was too numerous to be gradually absorbed by the consanguine gentes and tribes. The gentile associations confronted these masses as exclusive, privileged bodies; what had originally been a naturally-grown democracy was transformed into a hateful aristocracy. Lastly, the gentile constitution had grown out of a society that knew no internal antagonisms, and was adapted only for such a society. It

<sup>1</sup> For the number of slaves in Athens, see above, p. 95. In Corinth, at the city's zenith, it was 460,000, and in Aegina 470,000; in both, ten times the number of free burghers. [*Note by Engels.*]

Engels gives the page of the 4th German edition. See p. 247 of this volume.—*Ed.*



had no coercive power except public opinion. But now a society had come into being that by the force of all its economic conditions of existence had to split up into freemen and slaves, into exploiting rich and exploited poor; a society that was not only incapable of reconciling these antagonisms, but had to drive them more and more to a head. Such a society could only exist either in a state of continuous, open struggle of these classes against one another or under the rule of a third power which, while ostensibly standing above the classes struggling with each other, suppressed their open conflict and permitted a class struggle at most in the economic field, in a so-called legal form. The gentile constitution had outlived its usefulness. It was burst asunder by the division of labour and by its result, the division of society into classes. Its place was taken by the *state*.

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Above we discussed separately each of the three main forms in which the state was built up on the ruins of the gentile constitution. Athens represented the purest, most classical form. Here the state sprang directly and mainly out of the class antagonisms that developed within gentile society. In Rome gentile society became an exclusive aristocracy amidst a numerous plebs, standing outside of it, having no rights but only duties. The victory of the plebs burst the old gentile constitution asunder and erected on its ruins the state, in which both the gentile aristocracy and the plebs were soon wholly absorbed. Finally, among the German vanquishers of the Roman Empire, the state sprang up as a direct result of the conquest of large foreign territories, which the gentile constitution had no means of ruling. As this conquest did not necessitate either a serious struggle with the old population or a more advanced division of labour, and as conquered and conquerors were almost at the same stage of economic development and thus the economic basis of society remained the same as before, therefore, the gentile constitution could continue for many centuries in a changed, territorial form, in the shape of a mark constitution, and even rejuvenate itself for a time in enfeebled form in the noble and patrician families of later years, and even in peasant families, as in Dithmarschen.<sup>1</sup>

The state is, therefore, by no means a power forced on society from without; just as little is it "the reality of the ethical idea,"

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<sup>1</sup> The first historian who had at least an approximate idea of the nature of the gens was Niebuhr, thanks to his knowledge of the Dithmarschen families—to which, however, he also owes the errors he mechanically copied from there. [Note by Engels.]

"the image and reality of reason," as Hegel maintains. Rather, it is a product of society at a certain stage of development; it is the admission that this society has become entangled in an insoluble contradiction with itself, that it is cleft into irreconcilable antagonisms which it is powerless to dispel. But in order that these antagonisms, classes with conflicting economic interests, might not consume themselves and society in sterile struggle, a power seemingly standing above society became necessary for the purpose of moderating the conflict, of keeping it within the bounds of "order"; and this power, arisen out of society, but placing itself above it, and increasingly alienating itself from it, is the state.

In contradistinction to the old gentile organization, the state, first, divides its subjects *according to territory*. As we have seen, the old gentile associations, built upon and held together by ties of blood, became inadequate, largely because they presupposed that the members were bound to a given territory, a bond which had long ceased to exist. The territory remained, but the people had become mobile. Hence, division according to territory was taken as the point of departure, and citizens were allowed to exercise their public rights and duties wherever they settled, irrespective of gens and tribe. This organization of citizens according to locality is a feature common to all states. That is why it seems natural to us; but we have seen what long and arduous struggles were needed before it could replace, in Athens and Rome, the old organization according to gentes.

The second is the establishment of a *public power* which no longer directly coincided with the population organizing itself as an armed force. This special public power is necessary, because a self-acting armed organization of the population has become impossible since the cleavage into classes. The slaves also belonged to the population; the 90,000 citizens of Athens formed only a privileged class as against the 365,000 slaves. The people's army of the Athenian democracy was an aristocratic public power against the slaves, whom it kept in check; however, a gendarmerie also became necessary to keep the citizens in check, as we related above. This public power exists in every state; it consists not merely of armed people but also of material adjuncts, prisons and institutions of coercion of all kinds, of which gentile society knew nothing. It may be very insignificant, almost infinitesimal, in societies where class antagonisms are still undeveloped and in out-of-the-way places, as was the case at certain times and in certain regions in the United States of America. It grows stronger, however, in proportion as class antagonisms within the state become more acute, and as adjacent states become larger and more populated. We have only to look at our present-day Europe,

where class struggle and rivalry in conquest have screwed up the public power to such a pitch that it threatens to devour the whole of society and even the state.

In order to maintain this public power, contributions from the citizens become necessary—*taxes*. These were absolutely unknown in gentile society; but we know enough about them today. As civilization advances, these taxes become inadequate; the state makes drafts on the future, contracts loans, *public debts*. Old Europe can tell a tale about these, too.

In possession of the public power and of the right to levy taxes, the officials, as organs of society, now stand *above* society. The free, voluntary respect that was accorded to the organs of the gentile constitution does not satisfy them, even if they could gain it; being the vehicles of a power that is becoming alien to society, respect for them must be enforced by means of exceptional laws by virtue of which they enjoy special sanctity and inviolability. The shabbiest police servant in the civilized state has more “authority” than all the organs of gentile society put together; but the most powerful prince and the greatest statesman, or general, of civilization may well envy the humblest gentile chief for the uncoerced and undisputed respect that is paid to him. The one stands in the midst of society, the other is forced to attempt to represent something outside and above it.

As the state arose from the need to hold class antagonisms in check, but as it arose, at the same time, in the midst of the conflict of these classes, it is, as a rule, the state of the most powerful, economically dominant class, which, through the medium of the state, becomes also the politically dominant class, and thus acquires new means of holding down and exploiting the oppressed class. Thus, the state of antiquity was above all the state of the slave owners for the purpose of holding down the slaves, as the feudal state was the organ of the nobility for holding down the peasant serfs and bondsmen, and the modern representative state is an instrument of exploitation of wage labour by capital. By way of exception, however, periods occur in which the warring classes balance each other so nearly that the state power, as ostensible mediator, acquires, for the moment, a certain degree of independence of both. Such was the absolute monarchy of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which held the balance between the nobility and the class of burghers; such was the Bonapartism of the First, and still more of the Second French Empire, which played off the proletariat against the bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. The latest performance of this kind, in which ruler and ruled appear equally ridiculous, is the new German Empire of the Bismarck nation: here capi-

talists and workers are balanced against each other and equally cheated for the benefit of the impoverished Prussian cabbage junkers.

In most of the historical states, the rights of citizens are, besides, apportioned according to their wealth, thus directly expressing the fact that the state is an organization of the possessing class for its protection against the non-possessing class. It was so already in the Athenian and Roman classification according to property. It was so in the medieval feudal state, in which the alignment of political power was in conformity with the amount of land owned. It is seen in the electoral qualifications of the modern representative states. Yet this political recognition of property distinctions is by no means essential. On the contrary, it marks a low stage of state development. The highest form of the state, the democratic republic, which under our modern conditions of society is more and more becoming an inevitable necessity, and is the form of state in which alone the last decisive struggle between proletariat and bourgeoisie can be fought out—the democratic republic officially knows nothing any more of property distinctions. In it wealth exercises its power indirectly, but all the more surely. On the one hand, in the form of the direct corruption of officials, of which America provides the classical example; on the other hand, in the form of an alliance between government and Stock Exchange, which becomes the easier to achieve the more the public debt increases and the more joint-stock companies concentrate in their hands not only transport but also production itself, using the Stock Exchange as their centre. The latest French republic as well as the United States is a striking example of this; and good old Switzerland has contributed its share in this field. But that a democratic republic is not essential for this fraternal alliance between government and Stock Exchange is proved by England and also by the new German Empire, where one cannot tell who was elevated more by universal suffrage, Bismarck or Bleichröder. And lastly, the possessing class rules directly through the medium of universal suffrage. As long as the oppressed class, in our case, therefore, the proletariat, is not yet ripe to emancipate itself, it will in its majority regard the existing order of society as the only one possible and, politically, will form the tail of the capitalist class, its extreme left wing. To the extent, however, that this class matures for its self-emancipation, it constitutes itself as its own party and elects its own representatives, and not those of the capitalists. Thus, universal suffrage is the gauge of the maturity of the working class. It cannot and never will be anything more in the present-day state; but that is sufficient. On the day the thermometer of universal suffrage registers boiling point among the workers, both they and the capitalists will know what to do.

The state, then, has not existed from all eternity. There have been societies that did without it, that had no conception of the state and state power. At a certain stage of economic development, which was necessarily bound up with the cleavage of society into classes, the state became a necessity owing to this cleavage. We are now rapidly approaching a stage in the development of production at which the existence of these classes not only will have ceased to be a necessity, but will become a positive hindrance to production. They will fall as inevitably as they arose at an earlier stage. Along with them the state will inevitably fall. The society that will organize production on the basis of a free and equal association of the producers will put the whole machinery of state where it will then belong: into the Museum of Antiquities, by the side of the spinning wheel and the bronze axe.

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Thus, from the foregoing, civilization is that stage of development of society at which division of labour, the resulting exchange between individuals, and commodity production, which combines the two, reach their complete unfoldment and revolutionize the whole of hitherto existing society.

Production at all former stages of society was essentially collective, and, likewise, consumption took place by the direct distribution of the products within larger or smaller communistic communities. This production in common was carried on within the narrowest limits, but concomitantly the producers were masters of their process of production and of their product. They knew what became of the product: they consumed it, it did not leave their hands; and as long as production was carried on on this basis, it could not grow beyond the control of the producers, and it could not raise any strange, phantom powers against them, as is the case regularly and inevitably under civilization.

But, slowly, division of labour crept into this process of production. It undermined the collective nature of production and appropriation, it made appropriation by individuals the largely prevailing rule, and thus gave rise to exchange between individuals—how, we examined above. Gradually, the production of commodities became the dominant form.

With the production of commodities, production no longer for one's own consumption but for exchange, the products necessarily pass from hand to hand. The producer parts with his product in the course of exchange; he no longer knows what becomes of it. As soon as money, and with it the merchant, steps in as a middleman between the producers, the process of exchange becomes still more com-

plicated, the ultimate fate of the product still more uncertain. The merchants are numerous and none of them knows what the other is doing. Commodities now pass not only from hand to hand, but also from market to market. The producers have lost control of the aggregate production of the conditions of their own life, and the merchants have not acquired it. Products and production become the playthings of chance.

But chance is only one pole of an interrelation, the other pole of which is called necessity. In nature, where chance also seems to reign, we have long ago demonstrated in each particular field the inherent necessity and regularity that asserts itself in this chance. What is true of nature holds good also for society. The more a social activity, a series of social processes, becomes too powerful for conscious human control, grows beyond human reach, the more it seems to have been left to pure chance, the more do its peculiar and innate laws assert themselves in this chance, as if by natural necessity. Such laws also control the fortuities of the production and exchange of commodities; these laws confront the individual producer and exchanger as strange and, in the beginning, even as unknown powers, the nature of which must first be laboriously investigated and ascertained. These economic laws of commodity production are modified at the different stages of development of this form of production; on the whole, however, the entire period of civilization has been dominated by these laws. To this day, the product is master of the producer; to this day, the total production of society is regulated, not by a collectively thought-out plan, but by blind laws, which operate with elemental force, in the last resort in the storms of periodic commercial crises.

We saw above how human labour power became able, at a rather early stage of development of production, to produce considerably more than was needed for the producer's maintenance, and how this stage, in the main, coincided with that of the first appearance of the division of labour and of exchange between individuals. Now, it was not long before the great "truth" was discovered that man, too, may be a commodity; that human power may be exchanged and utilized by converting man into a slave. Men had barely started to engage in exchange when they themselves were exchanged. The active became a passive, whether man wanted it or not.

With slavery, which reached its fullest development in civilization, came the first great cleavage of society into an exploiting and an exploited class. This cleavage has continued during the whole period of civilization. Slavery was the first form of exploitation, peculiar to the world of antiquity; it was followed by serfdom in the Middle Ages, and by wage labour in modern times. These are the

three great forms of servitude, characteristic of the three great epochs of civilization; open, and, latterly, disguised slavery, are its steady companions.

The stage of commodity production, with which civilization began, is marked economically by the introduction of 1) metal money and, thus, of money capital, interest and usury; 2) the merchants acting as middlemen between producers; 3) private ownership of land and mortgage; 4) slave labour as the prevailing form of production. The form of the family corresponding to civilization and under it becoming the definitely prevailing form is monogamy, the supremacy of the man over the woman, and the individual family as the economic unit of society. The cohesive force of civilized society is the state, which in all typical periods is exclusively the state of the ruling class, and in all cases remains essentially a machine for keeping down the oppressed, exploited class. Other marks of civilization are: on the one hand, fixation of the contrast between town and country as the basis of the entire division of social labour; on the other hand, the introduction of wills, by which the property holder is able to dispose of his property even after his death. This institution, which was a direct blow at the old gentile constitution, was unknown in Athens until the time of Solon; in Rome it was introduced very early, but we do not know when.<sup>1</sup> Among the Germans it was introduced by the priests in order that the good honest German might without hindrance bequeath his property to the Church.

With this constitution as its foundation civilization has accomplished things with which the old gentile society was totally unable to cope. But it accomplished them by playing on the most sordid instincts and passions of man, and by developing them at the expense of all his other faculties. Naked greed has been the moving spirit of civilization from the first day of its existence to the present time; wealth, more wealth and wealth again; wealth, not of society, but of this shabby individual was its sole and determining aim. If, in the pursuit of this aim, the increasing development of science and repeated periods of the fullest blooming of art fell into its lap,

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<sup>1</sup> Lassalle's *Das System der erworbenen Rechte* [*System of Acquired Rights*] turns, in its second part, mainly on the proposition that the Roman testament is as old as Rome itself, that in Roman history there was never "a time when testaments did not exist"; that the testament arose rather in pre-Roman times out of the cult of the dead. As a confirmed Hegelian of the old school, Lassalle derived the provisions of the Roman law not from the social condition of the Romans, but from the "speculative conception" of the will, and thus arrived at this totally unhistoric assertion. This is not to be wondered at in a book that from the same speculative conception draws the conclusion that the transfer of property was purely a secondary matter in Roman inheritance. Lassalle

it was only because without them the ample present-day achievements in the accumulation of wealth would have been impossible.

Since the exploitation of one class by another is the basis of civilization, its whole development moves in a continuous contradiction. Every advance in production is at the same time a retrogression in the condition of the oppressed class, that is, of the great majority. What is a boon for the one is necessarily a bane for the other; each new emancipation of one class always means a new oppression of another class. The most striking proof of this is furnished by the introduction of machinery, the effects of which are well known today. And while among barbarians, as we have seen, hardly any distinction could be made between rights and duties, civilization makes the difference and antithesis between these two plain even to the dullest mind by assigning to one class pretty nearly all the rights, and to the other class pretty nearly all the duties.

But this is not as it ought to be. What is good for the ruling class should be good for the whole of the society with which the ruling class identifies itself. Therefore, the more civilization advances, the more it is compelled to cover the ills it necessarily creates with the cloak of love, to embellish them, or to deny their existence; in short, to introduce conventional hypocrisy—unknown both in previous forms of society and even in the earliest stages of civilization—that culminates in the declaration: The exploiting class exploits the oppressed class solely and exclusively in the interest of the exploited class itself; and if the latter fails to appreciate this, and even becomes rebellious, it thereby shows the basest ingratitude to its benefactors, the exploiters.<sup>1</sup>

And now, in conclusion, Morgan's verdict on civilization: "Since the advent of civilization, the outgrowth of property has been so immense, its forms so diversified, its uses so expanding and its management so intelligent in the interests of its owners that it *has become*, on the part of the people, *an unmanageable power. The human mind stands bewildered in the presence of its own creation.* The time will come, nevertheless, when human intelligence will rise to the mastery over property, and define the relations of the state to

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not only believes in the illusions of Roman jurists, especially of the earlier period, but he even excels them. [Note by Engels.]

<sup>1</sup> I had intended at the outset to place the brilliant critique of civilization, scattered through the works of Fourier, by the side of Morgan's and my own. Unfortunately, I cannot spare the time. I only wish to remark that Fourier already considered monogamy and property in land as the main characteristics of civilization, and that he described them as a war of the rich against the poor. We also find already in his work the deep appreciation of the fact that in all imperfect societies, those torn by conflicting interests, the individual families (*les familles incohérentes*) are the economic units. [Note by Engels.]



the property it protects, as well as the obligations and the limits of the rights of its owners. The interests of society are paramount to individual interests, and the two must be brought into just and harmonious relations. A mere property career is not the final destiny of mankind, if progress is to be the law of the future as it has been of the past. The time which has passed away since civilization began is but a fragment of the past duration of man's existence; and but a fragment of the ages yet to come. The dissolution of society bids fair to become the termination of a career of which property is the end and aim, because such a career contains the elements of self-destruction. Democracy in government, brotherhood in society, equality in rights and privileges, and universal education, foreshadow the next higher plane of society to which experience, intelligence and knowledge are steadily tending. *It will be a revival, in a higher form, of the liberty, equality and fraternity of the ancient gentes.*" (Morgan, *Ancient Society*, p. 552.)

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## *Frederick Engels*

### MARX AND THE *NEUE RHEINISCHE ZEITUNG* (1848-1849)

On the outbreak of the February Revolution, the German "Communist Party," as we called it, consisted only of a small core, the Communist League, which was organized as a secret propaganda society. The League was secret only because at that time no freedom of association or assembly existed in Germany. Besides the workers' associations abroad, from which it obtained recruits, it had about thirty communities, or sections, in the country itself and, in addition, isolated members in many places. This inconsiderable fighting force, however, possessed a leader, *Marx*, to whom all willingly subordinated themselves, a leader of the first rank, and, thanks to him, a program of principles and tactics that today still has full validity: the *Communist Manifesto*.

It is the tactical part of the program that concerns us here in the first instance. This part stated in general:

"The Communists do not form a separate party opposed to other working-class parties.

"They have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole.

"They do not set up any sectarian principles of their own, by which to shape and mould the proletarian movement.

"The Communists are distinguished from the other working-class parties by this only: 1) In the national struggles of the proletarians of the different countries, they point out and bring to the front *the common interests* of the entire proletariat, *independently of all nationality*. 2) In the various stages of development which the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie has to pass through, they always and everywhere represent *the interests of the movement as a whole*.

"The Communists, therefore, are on the one hand, *practically*, the most advanced and resolute section of the working-class parties

of every country, that section which pushes forward all others; on the other hand, *theoretically*, they have over the great mass of the proletariat the advantage of clearly understanding the line of march, the conditions, and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement."<sup>1</sup>

And for the German party it stated in particular:

"In Germany they<sup>2</sup> fight with the bourgeoisie whenever it acts in a revolutionary way, against the absolute monarchy, the feudal squirearchy, and the petty bourgeoisie.

"But they never cease, for a single instant, to instil into the working class the clearest possible recognition of the hostile antagonism between bourgeoisie and proletariat, in order that the German workers may straightway use, as so many weapons against the bourgeoisie, the social and political conditions that the bourgeoisie must necessarily introduce along with its supremacy, and in order that, after the fall of the reactionary classes in Germany, the fight against the bourgeoisie itself may immediately begin.

"The Communists turn their attention chiefly to Germany, because that country is on the eve of a bourgeois revolution," etc. (Manifesto, Section IV.)<sup>3</sup>

Never has a tactical program justified itself as well as this one. Put forward on the eve of the revolution, it stood the test of this revolution; whenever, since this period, a workers' party has deviated from it, the deviation has met its punishment; and today, after almost forty years, it serves as the guiding line of all resolute and class-conscious workers' parties in Europe, from Madrid to St. Petersburg.

The February events in Paris precipitated the imminent German Revolution and thereby modified its character. The German bourgeoisie, instead of conquering by virtue of its own power, conquered in the tow of a French workers' revolution. Before it had yet conclusively overthrown its old adversaries—the absolute monarchy, feudal landownership, the bureaucracy and the cowardly petty bourgeoisie—it had to confront a new enemy, the proletariat. However, the effects of the economic conditions, which lagged far behind those of France and England, and of the likewise backward class position of Germany resulting therefrom, immediately showed themselves here.

The German bourgeoisie, which had only just begun to establish its large-scale industry, had neither the strength nor the courage to win for itself unconditional domination in the state, nor was

<sup>1</sup> Engels' italics. See Marx and Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Moscow 1949, pp. 64-65.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> That is, the Communists.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, Moscow 1949, p. 98.—Ed.

there any compelling necessity for it to do so. The proletariat, undeveloped to an equal degree, grown up in complete intellectual enslavement, unorganized and still not even capable of independent organization, possessed only a vague feeling of the deep antagonism between its interests and those of the bourgeoisie. Hence, although in point of fact the threatening antagonist of the latter, it remained, on the other hand, its political appendage. Terrified not by what the German proletariat was, but by what it threatened to become and what the French proletariat already was, the bourgeoisie saw its sole salvation in some compromise, even the most cowardly, with monarchy and nobility; as the proletariat was still unacquainted with its own historical role, the bulk of it had, at the start, to take on the role of the forward-pushing, extreme Left wing of the bourgeoisie. The German workers had above all to win those rights which were indispensable to their independent organization as a class party: freedom of the press, association and assembly—rights which the bourgeoisie, in the interest of its own rule, ought to have fought for, but which it itself in its fear now began to dispute, as far as they concerned the workers. The few hundred separate League members vanished in the enormous mass that had been suddenly hurled into the movement. Thus, the German proletariat at first appeared on the political stage as the extreme democratic party.

In this way, when we founded a great newspaper in Germany, our banner was determined as a matter of course. It could only be that of democracy, but that of a democracy which everywhere emphasized in every point the specific proletarian character which it could not yet inscribe once for all on its banner. If we did not want to do that, if we did not want to take up the movement, adhere to its already existing, most advanced, actually proletarian side and to push it further, then there was nothing left for us to do but to preach Communism in a little provincial sheet and to found a tiny sect instead of a great party of action. But we had already been spoilt for the role of preachers in the wilderness; we had studied the utopians too well for that, nor was it for that we had drafted our program.

When we came to Cologne, preparations, partly by the democrats and partly by the Communists, had been made there for a big newspaper; it was desired to make this a purely local Cologne paper and to banish us to Berlin. But in twenty-four hours, especially thanks to Marx, we were in possession of the field, and the newspaper became ours, on the return concession of taking *Heinrich Bürgers* into the editorial board. The latter wrote *one* article (in No.2) and never another.

It was precisely Cologne and not Berlin we had to go to. First, Cologne was the centre of the Rhine province, which had gone through

the French Revolution, which had provided itself with *modern* legal conceptions in the *Code Napoléon*, which had developed by far the most important large-scale industry and which was in every respect at that time the most advanced part of Germany. Contemporary Berlin we knew only too well from our own observation, with its hardly hatched bourgeoisie, its cringing petty bourgeoisie, audacious in words but craven in deeds, its still wholly undeveloped workers, its mass of bureaucrats, aristocratic and court riff-raff, its entire character of a mere "*Residenz*."<sup>1</sup> Decisive, however, was the following: in Berlin the wretched Prussian *Landrecht*<sup>2</sup> prevailed and political cases were tried by professional magistrates; on the Rhine the *Code Napoléon* was in force, which knows no press trials, because it presupposes censorship, and if one committed, not a political crime, but only a *misdemeanour*, one came before a jury; in Berlin *after* the revolution young Schlöffel was sentenced to a year's imprisonment for a trifle, while on the Rhine we had unconditional freedom of the press—and we used it to the last drop.

Thus we began, on June 1, 1848, with a very limited share capital, of which only a little had been paid up and the shareholders themselves were more than unreliable. Half of them deserted us immediately after the first number and at the end of the month we no longer had any at all.

The editorial constitution was simply the dictatorship of Marx. A big daily paper, which has to be ready at a definite hour cannot observe a consistent policy with any other constitution. Moreover, Marx's dictatorship was a matter of course here, was undisputed and willingly recognized by all of us. It was primarily his clear vision and firm attitude that made this publication the most famous German newspaper of the years of revolution.

The political program of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* consisted of two main points:

A single, indivisible, democratic German republic, and war with Russia, which included the restoration of Poland.

The petty-bourgeois democracy was divided at that time into two factions: the North German, which would not mind putting up with a democratic Prussian emperor, and the South German, then almost wholly specifically Baden, which wanted to transform Germany into a federative republic after the Swiss model. We had to fight both of them. The interests of the proletariat forbade equally the Prussianization of Germany and the perpetuation of her division into petty states. These interests made imperative the definitive uni-

<sup>1</sup> *Residenz*: Seat of the reigning prince.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> *Landrecht*: Law of the land.—*Ed.*

fication of Germany into a *nation*, which alone could provide the battlefield, cleared of all traditional petty obstacles, on which proletariat and bourgeoisie were to measure their strength. But they equally forbade the establishment of Prussia as the head. The Prussian state with its whole system, its tradition and its dynasty was precisely the sole serious internal adversary which the revolution in Germany had to overthrow; and, moreover, Prussia could unify Germany only by tearing it apart, by the exclusion of German Austria. Dissolution of the Prussian and disintegration of the Austrian state, real unification of Germany as a republic—we could not have any other revolutionary immediate program. And this could be realized through war with Russia and only through such a war. I will come back to this last point later.

For the rest, the tone of the newspaper was by no means solemn, serious or enthusiastic. We had altogether contemptible opponents and treated the lot of them with the utmost scorn. The conspiring monarchy, the *camarilla*, the nobility, the *Kreuzzeitung*, the entire "reaction," about which the philistines were morally indignant—we treated them only with mockery and derision. Not less so also the new idols that had appeared on the scene through the revolution: the March ministers, the Frankfort and Berlin Assemblies, and both the Rights and the Lefts in them. The very first number began with an article which mocked at the inanity of the Frankfort parliament, the purposelessness of its long-winded speeches, the superfluity of its cowardly resolutions. It cost us half the shareholders. The Frankfort parliament was not even a debating club; hardly any debates took place there, but for the most part only academic dissertations prepared beforehand were ground out and resolutions adopted which were intended to inspire the German philistines but of which no one else took any notice.

The Berlin Assembly was of more importance: it confronted a real power, it did not debate and pass resolutions in the air, in a Frankfort cuckoo land somewhere beyond the clouds. Consequently, it was dealt with in more detail. But there also, the idols of the Lefts, Schulze-Delitsch, Behrends, Elsner, Stein, etc., were just as sharply attacked as those of Frankfort, their irresolution, hesitancy and penny wisdom were mercilessly exposed, and it was proved how step by step they compromised themselves into betraying the revolution. This, of course, evoked a shudder in the democratic petty bourgeois, who had only just manufactured these idols for his own use. To us this shudder was a sign that we had hit the bull's-eye.

We came out likewise against the illusion, zealously spread by the petty bourgeoisie, that the revolution had come to an end with

the March days and that one had only now to pocket the fruits. To us, February and March could have had the significance of a real revolution only if they had not been the conclusion but, on the contrary, the starting point of a long revolutionary movement in which, as in the Great French Revolution, the people would have developed further through its own struggles and the parties become more and more sharply differentiated until they had coincided entirely with the great classes, bourgeoisie, petty bourgeoisie and proletariat, and in which the separate positions would have been won one after another by the proletariat in a series of battles. Hence, we everywhere opposed also the democratic petty bourgeoisie when it tried to gloss over its class antagonism to the proletariat with the favourite phrase: after all, we all want the same thing; all the differences rest on mere misunderstandings. But the less we allowed the petty bourgeoisie to misunderstand our proletarian democracy, the tamer and more amenable it became toward us. The more sharply and resolutely one opposes it, the more readily it ducks and the more concessions it makes to the workers' party. Of that we have become convinced.

Finally, we exposed the parliamentary cretinism (as Marx called it) of the various so-called National Assemblies. These gentlemen had allowed all means of power to slip out of their hands, in part had voluntarily surrendered them again to the governments. In Berlin, as in Frankfort, alongside newly strengthened, reactionary governments there stood powerless assemblies, which nevertheless imagined that their impotent resolutions would shake the world in its foundations. This cretinous self-deception prevailed even among the extreme Lefts. We told them plainly that their parliamentary victory would coincide with their real defeat.

And it so happened both in Berlin and in Frankfort. When the "Lefts" obtained the majority, the government dispersed the entire Assembly; it could do so because the Assembly had forfeited all credit with the people.

When later I read *Bougeart's* book on *Marat*,<sup>1</sup> I found that in more than one respect we had only unconsciously imitated the great model of the genuine "*Ami du Peuple*" (not the one forged by the royalists) and that the whole outburst of rage and the whole falsification of history, by virtue of which throughout almost a century only an entirely distorted Marat had been known, were solely due to the fact that Marat mercilessly removed the veil from the idols of the moment, Lafayette, Bailly and others, and exposed them as already complete traitors to the revolution; and that he, like us,

<sup>1</sup> Alfred Bougeart, *Marat, l'ami du peuple* [*Marat, the Friend of the People*]. Paris 1865.—Ed.

did not want the revolution declared finished but continuing in permanence.

We openly proclaimed that the people of the tendency we represented could enter the struggle for the attainment of our real party aims only when the most extreme of the official parties existing in Germany came to the helm; then we would form the opposition to it.

Events, however, brought it about that besides mockery at our German opponents there also appeared fiery passion. The insurrection of the Paris workers in June 1848 found us at our post. From the first shot we were unconditionally on the side of the insurgents. After their defeat, Marx celebrated the vanquished in one of his most powerful articles.<sup>1</sup>

Then the last remaining shareholders deserted us. But we had the satisfaction of being the only paper in Germany, and almost in Europe, that held aloft the banner of the crushed proletariat at the moment when the bourgeois and petty bourgeois of all countries were overwhelming the vanquished with a torrent of slander.

Our foreign policy was simple: to come out on behalf of every revolutionary people, and to call for a general war of revolutionary Europe against the mighty bulwark of European reaction—Russia. From February 24 onwards it was clear to us that the revolution had only one really formidable enemy, Russia, and that the more the movement took on European dimensions the more was this enemy compelled to enter the struggle. The events of Vienna, Milan and Berlin were bound to delay the Russian attack, but its final coming was the more certain the closer the revolution came to Russia. But if one succeeded in getting Germany to make war on Russia, it was all up with the Hapsburgs and Hohenzollerns and the revolution would triumph along the whole line.

This policy pervaded every issue of the newspaper until the moment of the actual invasion of Hungary by the Russians, which fully confirmed our forecast and decided the defeat of the revolution.

When, in the spring of 1849, the decisive battle drew near, the language of the paper became more violent and passionate with every issue. *Wilhelm Wolff* reminded the Silesian peasants in the "Silesian Milliard" (eight articles), how on being emancipated from feudal services they had been cheated out of money and land by the landlords with the help of the government, and he demanded a thousand million talers in compensation.

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<sup>1</sup> "Die Junirevolution" ["The June Revolution"], *Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe*, Teil I, Bd. 7, S. 115-8.—Ed.



At the same time, in April, Marx's essay *Wage-Labour and Capital*<sup>1</sup> appeared in the form of a series of editorial articles as a clear indication of the social goal of our policy. Every issue, every special number, pointed to the great battle that was in preparation, to the sharpening of the antagonisms in France, Italy, Germany and Hungary. In particular, the special numbers in April and May were so many proclamations to the people to hold themselves in readiness for direct action.

"Outside, throughout the Reich," wonder was expressed that we carried on our activities so unconcernedly within a Prussian fortress of the first rank, in the face of a garrison of 8,000 troops and in the face of the guardhouse; but, on account of the eight rifles with bayonets and 250 live cartridges in the editorial room, and the red Jacobin caps of the compositors, our house was reckoned by the officers also as a fortress which was not to be taken by a mere *coup de main*.

At last, on May 18, 1849, the blow came.

The insurrection was suppressed in Dresden and Elberfeld, in Iserlohn it was encircled; the Rhine Province and Westphalia bristled with bayonets which, after completing the rape of the Prussian Rhineland, were intended to be marched against the Palatinate and Baden. Then at last the government ventured to come to close quarters with us. One-half of the editorial staff was prosecuted, the other half was liable to deportation as non-Prussians. Nothing could be done against it, as long as a whole army corps stood behind the government. We had to surrender our fortress, but we withdrew with our arms and baggage, with band playing and flag flying, the flag of the last issue, a red issue, in which we warned the Cologne workers against hopeless *putsches*, and called to them:

"In taking leave, the editors of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* thank you for the sympathy you have shown them. Their last word will always and everywhere be: *The Emancipation of the Working Class!*"

Thus the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* came to an end, shortly before it had completed its first year. Begun almost without financial resources—the little that had been promised it very soon, as we said, was lost to it—it had achieved a circulation of almost 5,000 by September. The state of siege in Cologne suspended it; in the middle of October it had to begin again at the beginning. But in May 1849, when it was suppressed, it already had 6,000 subscribers again, while the "*Kölnische*,"<sup>2</sup> at that time, according to its own admission, had not more than 9,000. No German newspaper,

<sup>1</sup> See K. Marx, *Wage Labour and Capital*, Moscow 1947.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> *Cologne Gazette*.—Ed.

before or since, has ever had the same power and influence or been able to electrify the proletarian masses as effectively as the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*.

And that it owed above all to *Marx*.

When the blow fell, the editorial staff dispersed. *Marx* went to Paris where the *dénouement*, then in preparation there, took place on June 13, 1849; *Wilhelm Wolff* now took his seat in the Frankfort parliament—now when the Assembly had to choose between being dispersed from above or joining the revolution; and I went to the Palatinate and became an adjutant in *Willich's* volunteer corps.

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## Frederick Engels

### ON THE HISTORY OF THE COMMUNIST LEAGUE

With the sentence of the Cologne Communists in 1852, the curtain falls on the first period of the independent German workers' movement. Today this period is almost forgotten. Yet it lasted from 1836 to 1852 and, with the spread of German workers abroad, the movement developed in almost all civilized countries. Nor is that all. The present-day international workers' movement is in substance a direct continuation of the German workers' movement of that time, which was the *first international workers' movement* of all time, and which brought forth many of those who took the leading role in the International Working Men's Association. And the theoretical principles that the Communist League had inscribed on its banner in the *Communist Manifesto* of 1847 constitute today the strongest international bond of the entire proletarian movement of both Europe and America.

Up to now there has been only one main source for a coherent history of that movement. This is the so-called Black Book, *The Communist Conspiracies of the Nineteenth Century*, by Wermuth and Stieber, Berlin, two parts, 1853 and 1854. This crude compilation, which bristles with deliberate falsifications, fabricated by two of the most contemptible police scoundrels of our century, today still serves as the final source for all non-communist writings about that period.

What I am able to give here is only a sketch, and even this only in so far as the League itself is concerned; only what is absolutely necessary to understand the *Revelations*.<sup>1</sup> I hope that some day I shall have the opportunity to work up the rich material collected by Marx and myself on the history of that glorious period of the youth of the international workers' movement.

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<sup>1</sup> Engels' present work was written as an introduction to the third edition of Marx's *Enthüllungen über den Kommunistenprozess zu Köln* [*Revelations about the Cologne Communist Trial*].—Ed.

In 1836 the most extreme, chiefly proletarian elements of the secret democratic-republican Outlaws' League, which was founded by German refugees in Paris in 1834, split off and formed the new secret *League of the Just*. The parent League, in which only sleepy-headed elements à la Jakobus Venedey were left, soon fell asleep altogether: when in 1840 the police scented out a few sections in Germany, it was hardly even a shadow of its former self. The new League, on the contrary, developed comparatively rapidly. Originally it was a German outlier of the French worker-Communism, reminiscent of Babouvism<sup>1</sup> and taking shape in Paris at about this time; community of goods was demanded as the necessary consequence of "equality." The aims were those of the Parisian secret societies of the time: half propaganda association, half conspiracy, Paris, however, being always regarded as the central point of revolutionary action, although the preparation of occasional *putsches* in Germany was by no means excluded. But as Paris remained the decisive battleground, the League was at that time actually not much more than the German branch of the French secret societies, especially the *Société des saisons*<sup>2</sup> led by Blanqui and Barbès, with which a close connection was maintained. The French went into action on May 12, 1839; the sections of the League marched with them and thus were involved in the common defeat.

Among the Germans arrested were *Karl Schapper* and *Heinrich Bauer*; Louis Philippe's government contented itself with deporting them after a fairly long imprisonment. Both went to London. Schapper came from Weilburg in Nassau and while a student of forestry at Giessen in 1832 was a member of the conspiracy organized by Georg Büchner; he took part in the storming of the Frankfort constable station on April 3, 1833, escaped abroad and in February 1834 joined Mazzini's march on Savoy. Of gigantic stature, resolute and energetic, always ready to risk civil existence and life, he was a model of the professorial revolutionist that played an important role in the thirties. In spite of a certain sluggishness of thought, he was by no means incapable of profound theoretical understanding, as is proved by his development from "demagogue"<sup>3</sup> to Communist, and he held then all the more rigidly to what he had once

<sup>1</sup> *Babouvism*: The doctrine of Gracchus Babeuf, a French utopian Communist of the period of the French bourgeois revolution of the end of the eighteenth century.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> *Society of the Seasons*.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup> *Demagogue*: This was the name applied by the German government authorities to those who during the first few decades of the nineteenth century held liberal-democratic ideas. In 1819 a special commission was appointed to investigate "subversive activities of the demagogues" in all the German states.—*Ed.*

come to recognize. Precisely on that account his revolutionary passion sometimes got the better of his understanding, but he always afterwards realized his mistake and openly acknowledged it. He was fully a man and what he did for the founding of the German workers' movement will not be forgotten.

Heinrich Bauer, from Franconia, was a shoemaker; a lively, alert, witty little fellow, whose little body, however, also contained much shrewdness and determination.

Arrived in London, where Schapper, who had been a compositor in Paris, now tried to earn his living as a teacher of languages, they both set to work gathering up the broken threads and made London the centre of the League. They were joined over here, if not already earlier in Paris, by *Joseph Moll*, a watchmaker from Cologne, a medium-sized Hercules—how often did Schapper and he victoriously defend the entrance to a hall against hundreds of onrushing opponents!—a man who was at least the equal of his two comrades in energy and determination, and intellectually superior to both of them. Not only was he a born diplomat, as the success of his numerous trips on various missions proved; he was also more capable of theoretical insight. I came to know all three of them in London in 1843. They were the first revolutionary proletarians whom I met, and however far apart our views were at that time in details—for I still owned, as against their narrow-minded equalitarian Communism,<sup>1</sup> a goodly dose of just as narrow-minded philosophical arrogance—I shall never forget the deep impression that these three real men made upon me, who was then still only wanting to become a man.

In London, as in a lesser degree in Switzerland, they had the benefit of freedom of association and assembly. As early as February 7, 1840, the legally functioning German Workers' Educational Association, which still exists, was founded. This Association served the League as a recruiting ground for new members, and since, as always, the Communists were the most active and intelligent members of the Association, it was a matter of course that its leadership lay entirely in the hands of the League. The League soon had several communities, or, as they were then still called, "lodges," in London. The same obvious tactics were followed in Switzerland and elsewhere. Where workers' associations could be founded, they were utilized in like manner. Where this was forbidden by law, one joined choral societies, athletic clubs, and the like. Connections were to a large extent maintained by members who were continually travelling back and forth; they also, when required, served as emis-

<sup>1</sup> By equalitarian Communism I understand, as stated, only that Communism which bases itself exclusively or predominantly on the demand for equality. [Note by Engels.]

saries. In both respects the League obtained lively support through the wisdom of the governments which, by resorting to deportation, converted any objectionable worker—and in nine cases out of ten he was a member of the League—into an emissary.

The extent to which the restored League spread was considerable. Notably in Switzerland, *Weitling*, *August Becker* (a highly gifted man who, however, like so many Germans, came to grief because of innate instability of character) and others created a strong organization more or less pledged to Weitling's communist system. This is not the place to criticize the Communism of Weitling. But as regards its significance as the first independent theoretical stirring of the German proletariat, I still today subscribe to Marx's words in the *Paris Vorwärts* of 1844: "Where could the (German) bourgeoisie—including its philosophers and learned scribes—point to a work relating to the emancipation of the bourgeoisie—its political emancipation—comparable to Weitling's *Guarantees of Harmony and Freedom*? If one compares the drab mealy-mouthed mediocrity of German political literature with this immeasurable and brilliant debut of the German workers, if one compares these *gigantic children's shoes of the proletariat* with the dwarf proportions of the worn-out political shoes of the bourgeoisie, one must prophesy an athlete's figure for this Cinderella." This athlete's figure confronts us today, although still far from being fully grown.

Numerous sections existed also in Germany; in the nature of things they were of a transient character, but those coming into existence more than made up for those passing away. Only after seven years, at the end of 1846, did the police discover traces of the League in Berlin (Mentel) and Magdeburg (Beck), without being in a position to follow them further.

In Paris, Weitling, who was still there in 1840, likewise gathered the scattered elements together again before he left for Switzerland.

The tailors formed the central force of the League. German tailors were everywhere: in Switzerland, in London, in Paris. In the last-named city, German was so much the prevailing tongue in this trade that I was acquainted there in 1846 with a Norwegian tailor who had travelled directly by sea from Trondhjem to France and in the space of eighteen months had learned hardly a word of French but had acquired an excellent knowledge of German. Two of the Paris communities in 1847 consisted predominantly of tailors, one of cabinetmakers.

After the centre of gravity had shifted from Paris to London, a new feature grew conspicuous: from being German, the League gradually became *international*. In the workers' society there were to be found, besides Germans and Swiss, also members of all those nationali-

ties for whom German served as the chief means of communication with foreigners, notably, therefore, Scandinavians, Dutch, Hungarians, Czechs, Southern Slavs, and also Russians and Alsatians. In 1847 the regular frequenters included a British grenadier of the Guards in uniform. The society soon called itself the *Communist Workers' Educational Association*, and the membership cards bore the inscription "All Men Are Brothers," in at least twenty languages, even if not without mistakes here and there. Like the open Association, so also the secret League soon took on a more international character; at first in a restricted sense, practically through the varied nationalities of its members, theoretically through the realization that any revolution to be victorious must be a European one. One did not go any further as yet; but the foundations were there.

Close connections were maintained with the French revolutionists through the London refugees, comrades-in-arms of May 12, 1839. Similarly with the more radical Poles. The official Polish *émigrés*, as also Mazzini, were, of course, opponents rather than allies. The English Chartists, on account of the specific English character of their movement, were disregarded as not revolutionary. The London leaders of the League came in touch with them only later, through me.

In other ways, too, the character of the League had altered with events. Although Paris was still—and at that time quite rightly—looked upon as the mother city of the revolution, one had nevertheless emerged from the state of dependence on the Paris conspirators. The spread of the League raised its self-consciousness. It was felt that roots were being struck more and more in the German working class and that these German workers were historically called upon to be the standard-bearers of the workers of the North and East of Europe. In Weitling was to be found a communist theoretician who could be boldly placed at the side of his contemporary French rivals. Finally, the experience of May 12 had taught us that for the time being there was nothing to be gained by attempts at *putsches*. And if one still continued to explain every event as a sign of the approaching storm, if one still preserved intact the old, semi-conspiratorial rules, that was mainly the fault of the old revolutionary defiance, which had already begun to collide with the sounder views that were gaining headway.

However, the social doctrine of the League, indefinite as it was, contained a very great defect, but one that had its roots in the conditions themselves. The members, in so far as they were workers at all, were almost exclusively artisans. Even in the big metropolises, the man who exploited them was usually only a small master. The exploitation of tailoring on a large scale, what is now called

the manufacture of ready-made clothes, by the conversion of handicraft tailoring into a domestic industry working for a big capitalist, was at that time even in London only just making its appearance. On the one hand, the exploiter of these artisans was a small master; on the other hand, they all hoped ultimately to become small masters themselves. In addition, a mass of inherited guild notions still clung to the German artisan at that time. The greatest honour is due to them, in that they, who were themselves not yet full proletarians but only an appendage of the petty bourgeoisie, an appendage which was passing into the modern proletariat and which did not yet stand in direct opposition to the bourgeoisie, that is, to big capital—in that these artisans were capable of instinctively anticipating their future development and of constituting themselves, even if not yet with full consciousness, the party of the proletariat. But it was also inevitable that their old handicraft prejudices should be a stumbling block to them at every moment, whenever it was a question of criticizing existing society in detail, that is, of investigating economic facts. And I do not believe there was a single man in the whole League at that time who had ever read a book on political economy. But that mattered little; for the time being “equality,” “brotherhood” and “justice” helped them to surmount every theoretical obstacle.

Meanwhile a second, essentially different Communism was developing alongside that of the League and of Weitling. While I was in Manchester, it was tangibly brought home to me that the economic facts, which have so far played no role or only a contemptible one in the writing of history, are, at least in the modern world, a decisive historical force; that they form the basis of the origination of the present-day class antagonisms; that these class antagonisms, in the countries where they have become fully developed, thanks to large-scale industry, hence especially in England, are in their turn the basis of the formation of political parties and of party struggles, and thus of all political history. Marx had not only arrived at the same view, but had already, in the *German-French Annals* (1844),<sup>1</sup> generalized it to the effect that, speaking generally, it is not the state which conditions and regulates civil society, but civil society which conditions and regulates the state, and, consequently, that policy and its history are to be explained from the economic relations and their development, and not *vice versa*. When I visited Marx in Paris in the summer of 1844, our complete agreement in all theoretical fields became evident and our joint work dates from that time. When,

<sup>1</sup> *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*: A radical journal published in Paris in 1844 by Marx and the Left Hegelian Arnold Ruge.—Ed.



in the spring of 1845, we met again in Brussels, Marx had already fully developed his materialist theory of history in its main features from the above-mentioned basis and we now applied ourselves to the detailed elaboration of the newly-won mode of outlook in the most varied directions.

This discovery, which revolutionized the science of history and, as we have seen, is essentially the work of Marx—a discovery in which I can claim for myself only a very insignificant share—was, however, of immediate importance for the contemporary workers' movement. Communism among the French and Germans, Chartism among the English, now no longer appeared as something accidental which could just as well not have occurred. These movements now presented themselves as a movement of the modern oppressed class, the proletariat, as the more or less developed forms of its historically necessary struggle against the ruling class, the bourgeoisie; as forms of the class struggle, but distinguished from all earlier class struggles by this one thing, that the present-day oppressed class, the proletariat, cannot achieve its emancipation without at the same time emancipating society as a whole from division into classes and, therefore, from class struggles. And Communism now no longer meant the concoction, by means of the imagination, of an ideal society as perfect as possible, but insight into the nature, the conditions and the consequent general aims of the struggle waged by the proletariat.

Now, we were by no means of the opinion that the new scientific results should be confided in large tomes exclusively to the "learned" world. Quite the contrary. We were both of us already deeply involved in the political movement, and possessed a certain following in the educated world, especially of Western Germany, and abundant contact with the organized proletariat. It was our duty to provide a scientific foundation for our view, but it was equally important for us to win over the European and in the first place the German proletariat to our conviction. As soon as we had become clear in our own minds, we set about the task. We founded a German workers' society in Brussels and took over the *Deutsche Brüsseler Zeitung*, which served us as an organ up to the February Revolution. We kept in touch with the revolutionary section of the English Chartists through Julian Harney, the editor of the central organ of the movement, *The Northern Star*, to which I was a contributor. We entered likewise into a sort of cartel with the Brussels democrats (Marx was vice-president of the Democratic Society<sup>1</sup>) and with the French

<sup>1</sup> *Democratic Society*: A society of an international character which united the Belgian democrats with the political emigrants living in Brussels. It was founded in September 1847.—Ed.

social-democrats of the *Réforme*,<sup>1</sup> which I furnished with news of the English and German movements. In short, our connections with the radical and proletarian organizations and press organs were quite what one could wish.

Our relations with the League of the Just were as follows: The existence of the League was, of course, known to us; in 1843 Schapper had suggested that I join it, which I at that time naturally refused to do. But we not only kept up our continuous correspondence with the Londoners but remained on still closer terms with Dr. Everbeck, then the leader of the Paris communists. Without going into the League's internal affairs, we learnt of every important happening. On the other hand, we influenced the theoretical views of the most important members of the League by word of mouth, by letter and through the press. For this purpose we also made use of various lithographed circulars, which we dispatched to our friends and correspondents throughout the world on particular occasions, when it was a question of the internal affairs of the Communist Party in process of formation. In these, the League itself sometimes came to be dealt with. Thus, a young Westphalian student, Hermann Kriege, who went to America, came forward there as an emissary of the League and associated himself with the crazy Harro Harring for the purpose of using the League to turn South America upside down. He founded a paper in which, in the name of the League, he preached an extravagant Communism of love dreaming, based on "love" and overflowing with love. Against this we let fly with a circular that did not fail of its effect. Kriege vanished from the League scene.

Later, Weitling came to Brussels. But he was no longer the naïve young journeyman-tailor who, astonished at his own talents, was trying to clarify in his own mind just what a communist society would look like. He was now the great man, persecuted by the envious on account of his superiority, who scented rivals, secret enemies and traps everywhere—the prophet, driven from country to country, who carried a recipe for the realization of heaven on earth ready-made in his pocket, and who was possessed with the idea that everybody intended to steal it from him. He had already fallen out with the members of the League in London; and in Brussels, where Marx and his wife welcomed him with almost superhuman forbearance, he also could not get along with anyone. So he soon afterwards went to America to try out his role of prophet there.

All these circumstances contributed to the quiet revolution that was taking place in the League, and especially among the leaders

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<sup>1</sup> *La Réforme*: A daily newspaper which was published in Paris from 1843 to January 1850.—Ed.

in London. The inadequacy of the previous conception of Communism, both the simple French equalitarian Communism and that of Weitling, became more and more clear to them. The tracing of Communism back to primitive Christianity introduced by Weitling—no matter how brilliant certain passages to be found in his *Gospel of Poor Sinners*—had resulted in delivering the movement in Switzerland to a large extent into the hands, first of fools like Albrecht, and then of exploiting fake prophets like Kuhlmann. The “true Socialism” dealt in by a few literary writers—a translation of French socialist phraseology into corrupt Hegelian German, and sentimental love dreaming (see the section on German or “True” Socialism in the *Communist Manifesto*)—that Kriege and the study of the corresponding literature introduced in the League was found soon to disgust the old revolutionists of the League, if only because of its slobbering febleness. As against the untenability of the previous theoretical views, and as against the practical aberrations resulting therefrom, it was realized more and more in London that Marx and I were right in our new theory. This understanding was undoubtedly promoted by the fact that among the London leaders there were now two men who were considerably superior to those previously mentioned in capacity for theoretical knowledge: the miniature painter Karl Pfänder from Heilbronn and the tailor Georg Eccarius from Thuringia.<sup>1</sup>

It suffices to say that in the spring of 1847 Moll visited Marx in Brussels and immediately afterwards me in Paris, and invited us repeatedly, in the name of his comrades, to enter the League. He reported that they were as much convinced of the general correctness of our mode of outlook as of the necessity of freeing the League from the old conspiratorial traditions and forms. Should we enter, we would be given an opportunity of expounding our critical Communism before a congress of the League in a manifesto, which would then be published as the manifesto of the League; we would likewise be able to contribute our quota towards the replacement of the obsolete League organization by one in keeping with the new times and aims.

We entertained no doubt that an organization within the German working class was necessary, if only for propaganda purposes,

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<sup>1</sup> Pfänder died about eight years ago in London. He was a man of peculiarly fine intelligence, witty, ironical and dialectical. Eccarius, as we know, was later for many years Secretary of the General Council of the International Working Men's Association, in the General Council of which the following old League members were to be found, among others: Eccarius, Pfänder, Lessner, Lochner, Marx and myself. Eccarius subsequently devoted himself exclusively to the English trade union movement. [Note by Engels.]

and that this organization, in so far as it would not be merely local in character, could only be a secret one, even outside Germany. Now, there already existed exactly such an organization in the shape of the League. What we previously objected to in this League was now relinquished as erroneous by the representatives of the League themselves; we were even invited to cooperate in the work of reorganization. Could we say no? Certainly not. Therefore, we entered the League; Marx founded a League community in Brussels from among our close friends, while I attended the three Paris communities.

In the summer of 1847, the first League Congress took place in London, at which W. Wolffr presented the Brussels and I the Paris communities. At this congress the reorganization of the League was carried through first of all. Whatever remained of the old mystical names dating back to the conspiratorial period was now abolished; the League now consisted of communities, circles, leading circles, a Central Committee and a Congress, and henceforth called itself the "Communist League." "The aim of the League is the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, the rule of the proletariat, the abolition of the old, bourgeois society based on class antagonisms and the foundation of a new society without classes and without private property"—thus ran the first article. The organization itself was thoroughly democratic, with elective and always removable boards. This alone barred all hankering after conspiracy, which requires dictatorship, and the League was converted—for ordinary peace times at least—into a pure propaganda society. These new Rules were submitted to the communities for discussion—so democratic was the procedure now followed—then once again debated at the Second Congress and finally adopted by the latter on December 8, 1847. They are to be found reprinted in Wermuth and Stieber, vol. I, p. 239, Appendix X.

The Second Congress took place during the end of November and beginning of December of the same year. Marx also attended this time and expounded the new theory in a fairly long debate—the congress lasted at least ten days. All contradiction and doubt were finally set at rest, the new basic principles were unanimously adopted, and Marx and I were commissioned to draw up the Manifesto. This was done immediately afterwards. A few weeks before the February Revolution it was sent to London to be printed. Since then it has travelled round the world, has been translated into almost all languages and today still serves in numerous countries as a guide for the proletarian movement. In place of the old League motto, "All Men Are Brothers," appeared the new battle cry, "Working Men of All Countries, Unite!" which openly proclaimed the international character of the struggle. Seventeen years later this battle

cry resounded throughout the world as the watchword of the International Working Men's Association, and today the militant proletariat of all countries has inscribed it on its banner.

The February Revolution broke out. The London Central Committee functioning hitherto immediately transferred its powers to the Brussels leading circle. But this decision came at a time when an actual state of siege already existed in Brussels, and the Germans in particular could no longer assemble anywhere. We were all of us just on the point of going to Paris, and so the new Central Committee decided likewise to dissolve, to hand over all its powers to Marx and to empower him immediately to constitute a new Central Committee in Paris. Hardly had the five persons who adopted this decision (March 3, 1848) separated, before the police forced their way into Marx's house, arrested him and compelled him to leave for France on the following day, which was just where he was wanting to go.

In Paris we all soon came together again. There the following document was drawn up and signed by all the members of the new Central Committee. It was distributed throughout Germany and many a one can still learn something from it even today:

### DEMANDS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY IN GERMANY <sup>1</sup>

1. The whole of Germany shall be declared a single indivisible republic.

3. Representatives of the people shall be paid so that workers also can sit in the parliament of the German people.

4. Universal arming of the people.

7. The estates of the princes and other feudal estates, all mines, pits, etc., shall be transformed into state property. On these estates, agriculture is to be conducted on a large scale and with the most modern scientific means for the benefit of all society.

8. Mortgages on peasant holdings shall be declared state property; interest on such mortgages shall be paid by the peasants to the state.

9. In the districts where tenant farming is developed, land rent or farming dues shall be paid to the state as a tax.

11. All means of transport: railways, canals, steamships, roads, post, etc., shall be taken over by the state. They are to be converted

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<sup>1</sup> Engels quotes here only the most important "Demands." They are given in full in the 1940 (Moscow) Eng. ed. of the *Communist Manifesto*, pp. 60-61.—Ed.

into state property and put at the disposal of the non-possessing class free of charge.

14. Limitation of the right of inheritance.

15. Introduction of a steeply graded progressive taxation and abolition of taxes on consumer goods.

16. Establishment of national workshops. The state shall guarantee a living to all workers and provide for those unable to work.

17. Universal free elementary education.

It is in the interest of the German proletariat, of the petty bourgeoisie and peasantry, to work with all possible energy to put the above measures through. For only by their realization can the millions in Germany, who up to now have been exploited by a small number of people and whom it will be attempted to keep in further subjection, get their rights and the power that are their due as the producers of all wealth.

The Committee: *Karl Marx, Karl Schapper,*

*H. Bauer, F. Engels, J. Moll, W. Wolff*

At that time the craze for revolutionary legions prevailed in Paris. Spaniards, Italians, Belgians, Dutch, Poles and Germans flocked together in crowds to liberate their respective fatherlands. The German legion was led by Herwegh, Bornsted, Börnstein. Since immediately after the revolution all foreign workers not only lost their jobs but in addition were harassed by the public, the influx into these legions was very great. The new government saw in them a means of getting rid of foreign workers and granted them *l'étape du soldat*, that is, quarters along their line of march and a marching allowance of fifty centimes per day up to the frontier, whereafter the eloquent Lamartine, the Foreign Minister who was so readily moved to tears, quickly found an opportunity of betraying them to their respective governments.

We opposed this playing with revolution in the most decisive fashion. To carry an invasion, which was to import the revolution forcibly from outside, into the midst of the ferment then going on in Germany, meant to undermine the revolution in Germany itself, to strengthen the governments and to deliver the legionnaires—Lamartine guaranteed for that—defenceless into the hands of the German troops. When subsequently the revolution was victorious in Vienna and Berlin, the legion became all the more purposeless; but once begun, the game was continued.

We founded a German communist club, in which we advised the workers to keep away from the legion and to return instead to their homes singly and work there for the movement. Our old friend Flo-

con, who had a seat in the Provisional Government, obtained for the workers sent by us the same travel facilities as had been granted to the legionnaires. In this way we returned three or four hundred workers to Germany, including the great majority of the League members.

As could easily be foreseen, the League proved to be much too weak a lever as against the popular mass movement that had now broken out. Three-quarters of the League members who had previously lived abroad had changed their domicile by returning to their homeland; their previous communities were thus to a great extent dissolved and they lost all contact with the League. One part, the more ambitious among them, did not even try to resume this contact, but each one began a small separate movement on his own account in his own locality. Finally, the conditions in each separate petty state, each province and each town were so different that the League would have been incapable of giving more than the most general directives; such directives were, however, much better disseminated through the press. In short, from the moment when the causes which had made the secret League necessary ceased to exist, the secret League as such ceased to mean anything. But this could least of all surprise the persons who had just stripped this same secret League of the last vestige of its conspiratorial character.

That, however, the League had been an excellent school for revolutionary activity was now demonstrated. On the Rhine, where the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* provided a firm centre, in Nassau, in Rhenish Hesse, etc., everywhere members of the League stood at the head of the extreme democratic movement. The same was the case in Hamburg. In South Germany the predominance of petty-bourgeois democracy stood in the way. In Breslau, Wilhelm Wolff was active with great success until the summer of 1848; in addition he received a Silesian mandate as an alternate representative in the Frankfort parliament. Finally, the compositor Stephan Born, who had worked in Brussels and Paris as an active member of the League, founded a Workers' Brotherhood in Berlin which became fairly widespread and existed until 1850. Born, a very talented young man, who, however, was a bit too much in a hurry to become a political figure, "fraternized" with the most miscellaneous ragtag and bobtail in order to get a crowd together, and was not at all the man who could bring unity into the conflicting tendencies, light into the chaos. Consequently, in the official publications of the association the views represented in the *Communist Manifesto* were mingled hodgepodge with guild recollections and guild aspirations, fragments of Louis Blanc and Proudhon, protectionism, etc.; in short, they wanted to please everybody [*allen alles sein*]. In particular, strikes, trade

unions and producers' cooperatives were set going and it was forgotten that above all it was a question of first conquering, by means of political victories, the field in which alone such things could be realized on a lasting basis. When, afterwards, the victories of the reaction made the leaders of the Brotherhood realize the necessity of taking a direct part in the revolutionary struggle, they were naturally left in the lurch by the confused mass which they had grouped around themselves. Born took part in the Dresden uprising in May, 1849 and had a lucky escape. But, in contrast to the great political movement of the proletariat, the Workers' Brotherhood proved to be a pure *Sonderbund* [separate league], which to a large extent existed only on paper and played such a subordinate role that the reaction did not find it necessary to suppress it until 1850, and its surviving branches until several years later. Born, whose real name was Buttermilch, has not become a big political figure but a petty Swiss professor, who no longer translates Marx into guild language but the meek Renan into his own fulsome German.

With June 13, 1849, in Paris, the defeat of the May insurrections in Germany and the suppression of the Hungarian revolution by the Russians, a great period of the 1848 Revolution came to a close. But the victory of the reaction was as yet by no means final. A reorganization of the scattered revolutionary forces was required, and hence also of the League. The situation again forbade, as in 1848, any open organization of the proletariat; hence one had to organize again in secret.

In the autumn of 1849 most of the members of the previous central committees and congresses gathered again in London. The only ones still missing were Schapper, who was jailed in Wiesbaden but came after his acquittal, in the spring of 1850, and Moll, who, after he had accomplished a series of most dangerous missions and agitational journeys—in the end he recruited mounted gunners for the Palatinate artillery<sup>1</sup> right in the midst of the Prussian army in the Rhine Province—joined the Besançon workers' company of Willich's corps and was killed by a shot in the head during the encounter at the Murg in front of the Rotenfls Bridge. On the other hand Willich now entered upon the scene. Willich was one of those sentimental Communists so common in Western Germany since 1845, who on that account alone was instinctively, furtively antagonistic to our critical tendency. More than that, he was entirely the prophet, convinced of his personal mission as the predestined

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<sup>1</sup> The reference is to the artillery of the revolutionary army that fought against the Prussian government troops in the Baden-Palatinate insurrection of May-June 1849.—Ed.



liberator of the German proletariat and as such a direct claimant as much to political as to military dictatorship. Thus, to the primitive Christian Communism previously preached by Weitling was added a kind of communist Islam. However, the propaganda of this new religion was for the time being restricted to the refugee barracks under Willich's command.

Hence, the League was organized afresh; the Address of March 1850 was issued and Heinrich Bauer sent as an emissary to Germany. The Address, composed by Marx and myself, is still of interest today, because petty-bourgeois democracy is even now the party which must certainly be the first to come to power in Germany as the saviour of society from the communist workers on the occasion of the next European upheaval now soon due (the European revolutions, 1815, 1830, 1848-52, 1870, have occurred at intervals of fifteen to eighteen years in our century). Much of what is said there is, therefore, still applicable today. Heinrich Bauer's mission was crowned with complete success. The trusty little shoemaker was a born diplomat. He brought the former members of the League, who had partly become laggards and partly were acting on their own account, back into the active organization, and particularly also the then leaders of the Workers' Brotherhood. The League began to play the dominant role in the workers', peasants' and athletic associations to a far greater extent than before 1848, so that the next quarterly address to the communities, in June 1850, could already report that the student Schurz from Bonn (later on American ex-minister), who was touring Germany in the interest of petty-bourgeois democracy, "had found all fit forces already in the hands of the League." The League was undoubtedly the only revolutionary organization that had any significance in Germany.

But what purpose this organization should serve depended very substantially on whether the prospects of a renewed upsurge of the revolution were realized. And in the course of the year 1850 this became more and more improbable, indeed impossible. The industrial crisis of 1847, which had paved the way for the Revolution of 1848, had been overcome: a new, unprecedented period of industrial prosperity had set in; whoever had eyes to see and used them must have clearly realized that the revolutionary storm of 1848 was gradually spending itself.

"With this general prosperity, in which the productive forces of bourgeois society develop as luxuriantly as is at all possible within bourgeois relationships, *there can be no talk of a real revolution.* Such a revolution is only possible in the periods when both these factors, the modern productive forces and the bourgeois productive forms, come in collision with each other. The various quarrels in

which the representatives of the individual factions of the continental party of order now indulge and mutually compromise themselves, far from providing the occasion for new revolutions are, on the contrary, possible only because the basis of the relationships is momentarily so secure and, what the reaction does not know, so *bourgeois*. From it all attempts of the reaction to hold up bourgeois development *will rebound just as certainly as all moral indignation and all enthusiastic proclamations of the democrats.*" Thus Marx and I wrote in the "Revue of May to October 1850" in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung, Politisch-ökonomische Revue*, Nos. V and VI, Hamburg, 1850, p. 153.<sup>1</sup>

This cool estimation of the situation, however, was regarded as heresy by many persons, at a time when Ledru-Rollin, Louis Blanc, Mazzini, Kossuth and, among the lesser German lights, Ruge, Kinkel, Gögg and the rest of them crowded in London to form provisional governments of the future not only for their respective fatherlands but for the whole of Europe, and when the only thing still necessary was to obtain the requisite money from America as a loan for the revolution to realize at a moment's notice the European revolution and the various republics which went with it as a matter of course. Can anyone be surprised that a man like Willich was taken in by this, that Schapper, acting on his old revolutionary impulse, also allowed himself to be fooled, and that the majority of the London workers, to a large extent refugees themselves, followed them into the camp of the bourgeois-democratic artificers of revolution? Suffice it to say that the reserve maintained by us was not to the mind of these people; one was to enter into the game of making revolutions. We most decisively refused to do so. A split ensued; more about this is to be read in the *Revelations*. Then came the arrest of Nothjung, followed by that of Haupt, in Hamburg. The latter turned traitor by divulging the names of the Cologne Central Committee and being slated as the chief witness in the trial; but his relatives had no desire to be thus disgraced and bundled him off to Rio de Janeiro, where he later established himself as a businessman and in recognition of his services was appointed first Prussian and then German Consul General. He is now again in Europe.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See K. Marx, *The Class Struggle in France 1848-1850*, Moscow 1948, p. 168.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> Schapper died in London at the end of the sixties. Willich took part in the American Civil War with distinction; he became Brigadier-General and was shot in the chest during the battle of Murfreesboro (Tennessee) but recovered and died about ten years ago in America. Of the other persons mentioned above, I will only remark that Heinrich Bauer was lost track of in Australia, and that Weitling and Everbeck died in America. [Note by Engels.]



marck is the arbiter of Europe beyond the frontiers of Germany, but within them there grows daily more threateningly the athletic figure of the German proletariat that Marx foresaw already in 1844, the giant for whom the cramped imperial edifice designed to fit the philistine is even now becoming inadequate and whose mighty stature and broad shoulders are growing until the moment comes when by merely rising from his seat he will shatter the whole structure of the imperial constitution into fragments. And still more. The international movement of the European and American proletariat has become so much strengthened that not merely its first narrow form—the secret League—but even its second, infinitely wider form—the open International Working Men’s Association—has become a fetter for it, and that the simple feeling of solidarity based on the understanding of the identity of class position suffices to create and to hold together one and the same great party of the proletariat among the workers of all countries and tongues. The doctrines which the League represented from 1847 to 1852, and which at that time could be treated by the wise philistines with a shrug of the shoulders as the hallucinations of utter madcaps, as the secret doctrine of a few scattered sectarians, has now innumerable adherents in all civilized countries of the world, among those condemned to the Siberian mines as much as among the gold diggers of California; and the founder of this doctrine, the most hated, most slandered man of his time, *Karl Marx*, was, when he died, the ever-sought-for and ever-willing counsellor of the proletariat of both the old and the new world.

London, October 8, 1885

Written by Engels to serve as an introduction to the third edition of Karl Marx’s *Revelations about the Cologne Communist Trial*, which appeared in Zurich in 1885

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## LUDWIG FEUERBACH AND THE END OF CLASSICAL GERMAN PHILOSOPHY

### FOREWORD

In the preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, published in Berlin, 1859, Karl Marx relates how the two of us in Brussels in the year 1845 set about "to work out in common the opposition of our view"—the materialist conception of history which was elaborated mainly by Marx—"to the ideological view of German philosophy, in fact, to settle accounts with our erstwhile philosophical conscience. The resolve was carried out in the form of a criticism of post-Hegelian philosophy. The manuscript, two large octavo volumes, had long reached its place of publication in Westphalia when we received the news that altered circumstances did not allow of its being printed. We abandoned the manuscript to the gnawing criticism of the mice all the more willingly as we had achieved our main purpose—self-clarification."

Since then more than forty years have elapsed and Marx died without either of us having had an opportunity of returning to the subject. We have expressed ourselves in various places regarding our relation to Hegel, but nowhere in a comprehensive, connected account. To Feuerbach, who after all in many respects forms an intermediate link between Hegelian philosophy and our conception, we never returned.

In the meantime the Marxist world outlook has found representatives far beyond the boundaries of Germany and Europe and in all the literary languages of the world. On the other hand, classical German philosophy is experiencing a kind of rebirth abroad, especially in England and Scandinavia, and even in Germany itself people appear to be getting tired of the pauper's broth of eclecticism which is ladled out in the universities there under the name of philosophy.

In these circumstances a short, connected account of our relation to the Hegelian philosophy, of how we proceeded from as well as of how we separated from it, appeared to me to be required more and more. Equally, a full acknowledgement of the influence which Feuerbach, more than any other post-Hegelian philosopher, had upon us during our period of storm and stress, appeared to me to be an undischarged debt of honour. I therefore willingly seized the opportunity when the editors of the *Neue Zeit* asked me for a critical review of Starcke's book on Feuerbach. My contribution was published in that journal in the fourth and fifth numbers of 1886 and appears here in revised form as a separate publication.

Before sending these lines to press I have once again ferreted out and looked over the old manuscript of 1845-46.<sup>1</sup> The section dealing with Feuerbach is not completed. The finished portion consists of an exposition of the materialist conception of history which proves only how incomplete our knowledge of economic history still was at that time. It contains no criticism of Feuerbach's doctrine itself; for the present purpose, therefore, it was unusable. On the other hand, in an old note-book of Marx's I have found the eleven theses on Feuerbach printed here as an appendix. These are notes hurriedly scribbled down for later elaboration, absolutely not intended for publication, but invaluable as the first document in which is deposited the brilliant germ of the new world outlook.

*Frederick Engels*

London, February 21, 1888

Written by Engels for the separate edition of his book, *Ludwig Feuerbach*, which appeared in Stuttgart in 1888

Printed according to the text of the book

Translated from the German

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<sup>1</sup> The reference is to *Die Deutsche Ideologie* [*The German Ideology*]. English translation of parts I and III published in New York 1939.—Ed.

# LUDWIG FEUERBACH AND THE END OF CLASSICAL GERMAN PHILOSOPHY

## I

The volume<sup>1</sup> before us carries us back to a period which, although in time no more than a generation behind us, has become as foreign to the present generation in Germany as if it were already a hundred years old. Yet it was the period of Germany's preparation for the Revolution of 1848; and all that has happened since then in our country has been merely a continuation of 1848, merely the execution of the last will and testament of the revolution.

Just as in France in the eighteenth century, so in Germany in the nineteenth, a philosophical revolution ushered in the political collapse. But how different the two looked! The French were in open combat against all official science, against the church and often also against the state; their writings were printed across the frontier, in England or Holland, while they themselves were often in jeopardy of imprisonment in the Bastille. On the other hand, the Germans were professors, state-appointed instructors of youth; their writings were recognized textbooks, and the terminating system of the whole development—the Hegelian system—was even raised, in some degree, to the rank of a royal Prussian philosophy of state! Was it possible that a revolution could hide behind these professors, behind their obscure, pedantic phrases, their ponderous, wearisome sentences? Were not precisely those people who were then regarded as the representatives of the revolution, the liberals, the bitterest opponents of this brain-confusing philosophy? But what neither the government nor the liberals saw was seen at least by one man as early as 1833, and this man was indeed none other than Heinrich Heine.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Ludwig Feuerbach*, by K. N. Starcke, Ph. D., Stuttgart, Ferd. Enke, 1885. [Note by Engels.]

<sup>2</sup> Engels had in mind Heine's remarks on the "German philosophical revolution" contained in the latter's sketches *Zur Geschichte der Religion und Philosophie in Deutschland* [*On the History of Religion and Philosophy in Germany*], written in 1833.—Ed.

Let us take an example. No philosophical proposition has earned more gratitude from narrow-minded governments and wrath from equally narrow-minded liberals than Hegel's famous statement: "All that is real is rational; and all that is rational is real." That was tangibly a sanctification of things that be, a philosophical benediction bestowed upon despotism, police government, Star Chamber proceedings and censorship. That is how Frederick William III and how his subjects understood it. But according to Hegel certainly not everything that exists is also real, without further qualification. For Hegel the attribute of reality belongs only to that which at the same time is necessary: "in the course of its development reality proves to be necessity." A particular governmental measure—Hegel himself cites the example of "a certain tax regulation"—is therefore for him by no means real without qualification. That which is necessary, however, proves itself in the last resort to be also rational; and, applied to the Prussian state of that time, the Hegelian proposition, therefore, merely means: this state is rational, corresponds to reason, in so far as it is necessary; and if it nevertheless appears to us to be evil, but still, in spite of its evil character, continues to exist, then the evil character of the government is justified and explained by the corresponding evil character of its subjects. The Prussians of that day had the government that they deserved.

Now, according to Hegel, reality is, however, in no way an attribute predicable of any given state of affairs, social or political, in all circumstances and at all times. On the contrary. The Roman Republic was real, but so was the Roman Empire, which superseded it. In 1789 the French monarchy had become so unreal, that is to say, so robbed of all necessity, so irrational, that it had to be destroyed by the Great Revolution, of which Hegel always speaks with the greatest enthusiasm. In this case, therefore, the monarchy was the unreal and the revolution the real. And so, in the course of development, all that was previously real becomes unreal, loses its necessity, its right of existence, its rationality. And in the place of moribund reality comes a new, viable reality—peacefully if the old has enough intelligence to go to its death without a struggle; forcibly if it resists this necessity. Thus the Hegelian proposition turns into its opposite through Hegelian dialectics itself: All that is real in the sphere of human history becomes irrational in the process of time, is therefore irrational by its very destination, is tainted beforehand with irrationality; and everything which is rational in the minds of men is destined to become real, however much it may contradict existing apparent reality. In accordance with all the rules of the Hegelian method of thought, the proposition of the ra-



tionality of everything which is real resolves itself into the other proposition: All that exists deserves to perish.

But precisely therein lay the true significance and the revolutionary character of the Hegelian philosophy (to which, as the close of the whole movement since Kant, we must here confine ourselves), that it once for all dealt the death blow to the finality of all products of human thought and action. Truth, the cognition of which is the business of philosophy, was in the hands of Hegel no longer an aggregate of finished dogmatic statements, which, once discovered, had merely to be learned by heart. Truth lay now in the process of cognition itself, in the long historical development of science, which mounts from lower to ever higher levels of knowledge without ever reaching, by discovering so-called absolute truth, a point at which it can proceed no further, where it would have nothing more to do than to fold its hands and gaze with wonder at the absolute truth to which it had attained. And what holds good for the realm of philosophical knowledge holds good also for that of every other kind of knowledge and also for practical affairs. Just as knowledge is unable to reach a complete conclusion in a perfect, ideal condition of humanity, so is history unable to do so; a perfect society, a perfect "state," are things which can only exist in imagination. On the contrary, all successive historical systems are only transitory stages in the endless course of development of human society from the lower to the higher. Each stage is necessary, and therefore justified for the time and conditions to which it owes its origin. But in the face of new, higher conditions which gradually develop in its own womb, it loses its validity and justification. It must give way to a higher stage which will also in its turn decay and perish. Just as the bourgeoisie by large-scale industry, competition and the world market dissolves in practice all stable, time-honoured institutions, so this dialectical philosophy dissolves all conceptions of final, absolute truth and of absolute states of humanity corresponding to it. For it [dialectical philosophy] nothing is final, absolute, sacred. It reveals the transitory character of everything and in everything; nothing can endure before it except the uninterrupted process of becoming and of passing away, of endless ascendancy from the lower to the higher. And dialectical philosophy itself is nothing more than the mere reflection of this process in the thinking brain. It has, of course, also a conservative side: it recognizes that definite stages of knowledge and society are justified for their time and circumstances; but only so far. The conservatism of this mode of outlook is relative; its revolutionary character is absolute—the only absolute dialectical philosophy admits.

It is not necessary, here, to go into the question of whether this

mode of outlook is thoroughly in accord with the present state of natural science, which predicts a possible end even for the earth, and for its habitability a fairly certain one; which therefore recognizes that for the history of mankind, too, there is not only an ascending but also a descending branch. At any rate we still find ourselves a considerable distance from the turning point at which the historical course of society becomes one of descent, and we cannot expect Hegelian philosophy to be concerned with a subject which natural science, in its time, had not at all placed upon the agenda as yet.

But what must, in fact, be said here is this: that in Hegel the views developed above are not so sharply delineated. They are a necessary conclusion from his method, but one which he himself never drew with such explicitness. And this, indeed, for the simple reason that he was compelled to make a system and, in accordance with traditional requirements, a system of philosophy must conclude with some sort of absolute truth. Therefore, however much Hegel, especially in his *Logic*, emphasized that this eternal truth is nothing but the logical, that is, the historical, process itself, he nevertheless finds himself compelled to supply this process with an end, just because he has to bring his system to a termination at some point or other. In his *Logic* he can make this end a beginning again, since here the point of conclusion, the absolute idea—which is only absolute in so far as he has absolutely nothing to say about it—"alienates," that is, transforms, itself into nature and comes to itself again later in the mind, that is, in thought and in history. But at the end of the whole philosophy a similar return to the beginning is possible only in one way. Namely, by conceiving of the end of history as follows: mankind arrives at the cognition of this self-same absolute idea, and declares that this cognition of the absolute idea is reached in Hegelian philosophy. In this way, however, the whole dogmatic content of the Hegelian system is declared to be absolute truth, in contradiction to his dialectical method, which dissolves all dogmatism. Thus the revolutionary side is smothered beneath the overgrowth of the conservative side. And what applies to philosophical cognition applies also to historical practice. Mankind, which, in the person of Hegel, has reached the point of working out the absolute idea, must also in practice have gotten so far that it can carry out this absolute idea in reality. Hence the practical political demands of the absolute idea on contemporaries may not be stretched too far. And so we find at the conclusion of the *Philosophy of Right* that the absolute idea is to be realized in that monarchy based on social estates which Frederick William III so persistently but vainly promised to his subjects, that is, in a limited, moderate, indirect rule of the possessing classes suited to the petty-bourgeois

German conditions of that time; and, moreover, the necessity of the nobility is demonstrated to us in a speculative fashion.

The inner necessities of the system are, therefore, of themselves sufficient to explain why a thoroughly revolutionary method of thinking produced an extremely tame political conclusion. As a matter of fact the specific form of this conclusion springs from this, that Hegel was a German, and like his contemporary Goethe had a bit of the philistine's queue dangling behind. Each of them was an Olympian Zeus in his own sphere, yet neither of them ever quite freed himself from German philistinism.

But all this did not prevent the Hegelian system from covering an incomparably greater domain than any earlier system, nor from developing in this domain a wealth of thought which is astounding even today. The phenomenology of mind (which one may call a parallel of the embryology and paleontology of the mind, a development of individual consciousness through its different stages, set in the form of an abbreviated reproduction of the stages through which the consciousness of man has passed in the course of history), logic, natural philosophy, philosophy of mind, and the latter worked out in its separate, historical sub-divisions: philosophy of history, of right, of religion, history of philosophy, esthetics, etc.—in all these different historical fields Hegel laboured to discover and demonstrate the pervading thread of development. And as he was not only a creative genius but also a man of encyclopedic erudition, he played an epoch-making role in every sphere. It is self-evident that owing to the needs of the "system" he very often had to resort to those forced constructions about which his pigmy opponents make such a terrible fuss even today. But these constructions are only the frame and scaffolding of his work. If one does not loiter here needlessly, but presses on farther into the immense building, one finds innumerable treasures which today still possess undiminished value. With all philosophers it is precisely the "system" which is perishable; and for the simple reason that it springs from an imperishable desire of the human mind—the desire to overcome all contradictions. But if all contradictions are once for all disposed of, we shall have arrived at so-called absolute truth—world history will be at an end. And yet it has to continue, although there is nothing left for it to do—hence, a new, insoluble contradiction. As soon as we have once realized—and in the long run no one has helped us to realize it more than Hegel himself—that the task of philosophy thus stated means nothing but the task that a single philosopher should accomplish that which can only be accomplished by the entire human race in its progressive development—as soon as we realize that, there is an end to all philosophy in the hitherto accepted sense

of the word. One leaves alone "absolute truth," which is unattainable along this path or by any single individual; instead, one pursues attainable relative truths along the path of the positive sciences, and the summation of their results by means of dialectical thinking. At any rate, with Hegel philosophy comes to an end: on the one hand, because in his system he summed up its whole development in the most splendid fashion; and on the other hand, because, even though unconsciously, he showed us the way out of the labyrinth of systems to real positive knowledge of the world.

One can imagine what a tremendous effect this Hegelian system must have produced in the philosophy-tinged atmosphere of Germany. It was a triumphal procession which lasted for decades and which by no means came to a standstill on the death of Hegel. On the contrary, it was precisely from 1830 to 1840 that "Hegelianism" reigned most exclusively, and to a greater or lesser extent infected even its opponents. It was precisely in this period that Hegelian views, consciously or unconsciously, most extensively penetrated the most diversified sciences and leavened even popular literature and the daily press, from which the average "educated consciousness" derives its mental pabulum. But this victory along the whole front was only the prelude to an internal struggle.

As we have seen, the doctrine of Hegel, taken as a whole, left plenty of room for giving shelter to the most diverse practical party views. And in the theoretical Germany of that time, two things above all were practical: religion and politics. Whoever placed the chief emphasis on the Hegelian *system* could be fairly conservative in both spheres; whoever regarded the dialectical *method* as the main thing could belong to the most extreme opposition, both in politics and religion. Hegel himself, despite the fairly frequent outbursts of revolutionary wrath in his works, seemed on the whole to be more inclined to the conservative side. Indeed, his system had cost him much more "hard mental plugging" than his method. Towards the end of the thirties, the cleavage in the school became more and more apparent. The Left wing, the so-called Young Hegelians, in their fight with the pietist orthodox and the feudal reactionaries, abandoned bit by bit that philosophical-genteel reserve in regard to the burning questions of the day which up to that time had secured state toleration and even protection for their teachings. And when, in 1840, orthodox pietism and absolutist feudal reaction ascended the throne with Frederick William IV, open partisanship became unavoidable. The fight was still carried on with philosophical weapons, but no longer for abstract philosophical aims. It turned directly on the destruction of traditional religion and of the existing state.

And while in the *Deutsche Jahrbücher*<sup>1</sup> the practical ends were still predominantly put forward in philosophical disguise, in the *Rheinische Zeitung* of 1842 the Young Hegelian school revealed itself directly as the philosophy of the aspiring radical bourgeoisie and used the meagre cloak of philosophy only to deceive the censorship.

At that time, however, politics was a very thorny field, and hence the main fight came to be directed against religion; this fight, particularly since 1840, was indirectly also political. Strauss' *Life of Jesus*, published in 1835, had provided the first impulse. The theory therein developed of the formation of the gospel myths was combated later by Bruno Bauer with proof that a whole series of evangelic stories had been fabricated by the authors themselves. The controversy between these two was carried out in the philosophical disguise of a battle between "self-consciousness" and "substance." The question whether the miracle stories of the gospels came into being through unconscious-traditional myth-creation within the bosom of the community or whether they were fabricated by the evangelists themselves was magnified into the question whether, in world history, "substance" or "self-consciousness" was the decisive operative force. Finally came Stirner, the prophet of contemporary anarchism—Bakunin has taken a great deal from him—and capped the sovereign "self-consciousness" by his sovereign "ego."<sup>2</sup>

We will not go further into this side of the decomposition process of the Hegelian school. More important for us is the following: the main body of the most determined Young Hegelians was, by the practical necessities of its fight against positive religion, driven back to Anglo-French materialism. This brought them into conflict with their school system. While materialism conceives nature as the sole reality, nature in the Hegelian system represents merely the "alienation" of the absolute idea, so to say, a degradation of the idea. At all events, thinking and its thought-product, the idea, is here the primary, nature the derivative, which only exists at all by the condescension of the idea. And in this contradiction they floundered as well or as ill as they could.

Then came Feuerbach's *Essence of Christianity*.<sup>3</sup> With one blow it pulverized the contradiction, in that without circumlocu-

<sup>1</sup> The *Deutsche Jahrbücher für Wissenschaft und Kunst* [German Annuals of Science and Art]: Organ of the Young Hegelians edited by A. Ruge and T. Echtermeyer, and published in Leipzig from 1841 to 1843.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> Engels refers to Max Stirner's (pseudonym for Kaspar Schmidt) *Der Einzige und sein Eigentum* [The Ego and His Own], which appeared in 1845.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup> Feuerbach's *Das Wesen des Christentums* [The Essence of Christianity] appeared in Leipzig in 1841.—Ed.

tions it placed materialism on the throne again. Nature exists independently of all philosophy. It is the foundation upon which we human beings, ourselves products of nature, have grown up. Nothing exists outside nature and man, and the higher beings our religious fantasies have created are only the fantastic reflection of our own essence. The spell was broken; the "system" was exploded and cast aside, and the contradiction, shown to exist only in our imagination, was dissolved. One must himself have experienced the liberating effect of this book to get an idea of it. Enthusiasm was general; we all became at once Feuerbachians. How enthusiastically Marx greeted the new conception and how much—in spite of all critical reservations—he was influenced by it, one may read in *The Holy Family*.

Even the shortcomings of the book contributed to its immediate effect. Its literary, sometimes even high-flown, style secured for it a large public and was at any rate refreshing after long years of abstract and abstruse Hegelianizing. The same is true of its extravagant deification of love, which, coming after the now intolerable sovereign rule of "pure reason," had its excuse, if not justification. But what we must not forget is that it was precisely these two weaknesses of Feuerbach that "true Socialism," which had been spreading like a plague in "educated" Germany since 1844, took as its starting point, putting literary phrases in the place of scientific knowledge, the liberation of mankind by means of "love" in place of the emancipation of the proletariat through the economic transformation of production—in short, losing itself in the nauseous fine writing and ecstasies of love typified by Herr Karl Grün.

Another thing we must not forget is this: the Hegelian school disintegrated, but Hegelian philosophy was not overcome through criticism; Strauss and Bauer each took one of its sides and set it polemically against the other. Feuerbach broke through the system and simply discarded it. But a philosophy is not disposed of by the mere assertion that it is false. And so powerful a work as Hegelian philosophy, which had exercised so enormous an influence on the intellectual development of the nation, could not be disposed of by simply being ignored. It had to be "sublated" in its own sense, that is, in the sense that while its form had to be annihilated through criticism, the new content which had been won through it had to be saved. How this was brought about we shall see below.

But in the meantime the Revolution of 1848 thrust the whole of philosophy aside as unceremoniously as Feuerbach had thrust aside Hegel. And in the process Feuerbach himself was also pushed into the background.

## II

The great basic question of all philosophy, especially of more recent philosophy, is that concerning the relation of thinking and being. From the very early times when men, still completely ignorant of the structure of their own bodies, under the stimulus of dream apparitions<sup>1</sup> came to believe that their thinking and sensation were not activities of their bodies, but of a distinct soul which inhabits the body and leaves it at death—from this time men have been driven to reflect about the relation between this soul and the outside world. If upon death it took leave of the body and lived on, there was no occasion to invent yet another distinct death for it. Thus arose the idea of its immortality, which at that stage of development appeared not at all as a consolation but as a fate against which it was no use fighting, and often enough, as among the Greeks, as a positive misfortune. Not religious desire for consolation, but the quandary arising from the common universal ignorance of what to do with this soul, once its existence had been accepted, after the death of the body, led in a general way to the tedious notion of personal immortality. In an exactly similar manner the first gods arose through the personification of natural forces. And these gods in the further development of religions assumed more and more an extra-mundane form, until finally by a process of abstraction, I might almost say of distillation, occurring naturally in the course of man's intellectual development, out of the many more or less limited and mutually limiting gods there arose in the minds of men the idea of the one exclusive God of the monotheistic religions.

Thus the question of the relation of thinking to being, the relation of spirit to nature—the paramount question of the whole of philosophy—has, no less than all religion, its roots in the narrow-minded and ignorant notions of savagery. But this question could for the first time be put forward in its whole acuteness, could achieve its full significance, only after humanity in Europe had awakened from the long hibernation of the Christian Middle Ages. The question of the position of thinking in relation to being, a question which, by the way, had played a great part also in the scholasticism of the Middle Ages, the question: which is primary, spirit or nature—that question, in relation to the church, was sharpened into this:

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<sup>1</sup> Among savages and lower barbarians the idea is still universal that the human forms which appear in dreams are souls which have temporarily left their bodies; the real man is, therefore, held responsible for acts committed by his dream apparition against the dreamer. Thus Imthurn found this belief current, for example, among the Indians of Guiana in 1884. [*Note by Engels.*]

Did God create the world or has the world been in existence eternally?

The answers which the philosophers gave to this question split them into two great camps. Those who asserted the primacy of spirit to nature and, therefore, in the last instance, assumed world creation in some form or other—and among the philosophers, Hegel, for example, this creation often becomes still more intricate and impossible than in Christianity—comprised the camp of idealism. The others, who regarded nature as primary, belong to the various schools of materialism.

These two expressions, idealism and materialism, originally signify nothing else but this; and here too they are not used in any other sense. What confusion arises when some other meaning is put into them will be seen below.

But the question of the relation of thinking and being has yet another side: in what relation do our thoughts about the world surrounding us stand to this world itself? Is our thinking capable of the cognition of the real world? Are we able in our ideas and notions of the real world to produce a correct reflection of reality? In philosophical language this question is called the question of the identity of thinking and being, and the overwhelming majority of philosophers give an affirmative answer to this question. With Hegel, for example, its affirmation is self-evident; for what we cognize in the real world is precisely its thought-content—that which makes the world a gradual realization of the absolute idea, which absolute idea has existed somewhere from eternity, independent of the world and before the world. But it is manifest without further proof that thought can know a content which is from the outset a thought-content. It is equally manifest that what is to be proved here is already tacitly contained in the premises. But that in no way prevents Hegel from drawing the further conclusion from his proof of the identity of thinking and being that his philosophy, because it is correct for his thinking, is therefore the only correct one, and that the identity of thinking and being must prove its validity by mankind immediately translating his philosophy from theory into practice and transforming the whole world according to Hegelian principles. This is an illusion which he shares with well-nigh all philosophers.

In addition there is yet a set of different philosophers—those who question the possibility of any cognition, or at least of an exhaustive cognition, of the world. To them, among the more modern ones, belong Hume and Kant, and they have played a very important role in philosophical development. What is decisive in the refutation of this view has already been said by Hegel, in so far as this was



possible from an idealist standpoint. The materialistic additions made by Feuerbach are more ingenious than profound. The most telling refutation of this as of all other philosophical crotchets is practice, namely, experiment and industry. If we are able to prove the correctness of our conception of a natural process by making it ourselves, bringing it into being out of its conditions and making it serve our own purposes into the bargain, then there is an end to the Kantian ungraspable "thing-in-itself." The chemical substances produced in the bodies of plants and animals remained such "things-in-themselves" until organic chemistry began to produce them one after another, whereupon the "thing-in-itself" became a thing for us, as, for instance, alizarin, the colouring matter of the madder, which we no longer trouble to grow in the madder roots in the field, but produce much more cheaply and simply from coal tar. For three hundred years the Copernican solar system was a hypothesis with a hundred, a thousand or ten thousand chances to one in its favour, but still always a hypothesis. But when Leverrier, by means of the data provided by this system, not only deduced the necessity of the existence of an unknown planet, but also calculated the position in the heavens which this planet must necessarily occupy, and when Galle really found this planet,<sup>1</sup> the Copernican system was proved. If, nevertheless, the Neo-Kantians are attempting to resurrect the Kantian conception in Germany and the agnostics that of Hume in England (where in fact it never became extinct), this is, in view of their theoretical and practical refutation accomplished long ago, scientifically a regression and practically merely a shamefaced way of surreptitiously accepting materialism, while denying it before the world.

But during this long period from Descartes to Hegel and from Hobbes to Feuerbach, the philosophers were by no means impelled, as they thought they were, solely by the force of pure reason. On the contrary, what really pushed them forward most was the powerful and ever more rapidly onrushing progress of natural science and industry. Among the materialists this was plain on the surface, but the idealist systems also filled themselves more and more with a materialist content and attempted pantheistically to reconcile the antithesis between mind and matter. Thus, ultimately, the Hegelian system represents merely a materialism idealistically turned upside down in method and content.

It is, therefore, comprehensible that Starcke in his characterization of Feuerbach first of all investigates the latter's position in

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<sup>1</sup> The planet referred to is Neptune, discovered in 1846 by Johann Galle, an astronomer at the Berlin Observatory.—*Ed.*

regard to this fundamental question of the relation of thinking and being. After a short introduction, in which the views of the preceding philosophers, particularly since Kant, are described in unnecessarily ponderous philosophical language, and in which Hegel, by an all too formalistic adherence to certain passages of his works, gets far less than his due, there follows a detailed description of the course of development of Feuerbach's "metaphysics" itself, as this course was successively reflected in those writings of this philosopher which have a bearing here. This description is industriously and lucidly elaborated; only, like the whole book, it is loaded with a ballast of philosophical phrasology by no means everywhere unavoidable, which is the more disturbing in its effect the less the author keeps to the manner of expression of one and the same school, or even of Feuerbach himself, and the more he interjects expressions of very different tendencies, especially of the tendencies now rampant and calling themselves philosophical.

The course of evolution of Feuerbach is that of a Hegelian—a never quite orthodox Hegelian, it is true—into a materialist; an evolution which at a definite stage necessitates a complete rupture with the idealist system of his predecessor. With irresistible force Feuerbach is finally driven to the realization that the Hegelian pre-mundane existence of the "absolute idea," the "pre-existence of the logical categories" before the world existed, is nothing more than the fantastic survival of the belief in the existence of an extra-mundane creator; that the material, sensuously perceptible world to which we ourselves belong is the only reality; and that our consciousness and thinking, however supra-sensuous they may seem, are the product of a material, bodily organ, the brain. Matter is not a product of mind, but mind itself is merely the highest product of matter. This is, of course, pure materialism. But, having got so far, Feuerbach stops short. He cannot overcome the customary philosophical prejudice, prejudice not against the thing but against the name materialism. He says: "To me materialism is the foundation of the edifice of human essence and knowledge; but to me it is not what it is to the physiologist, to the natural scientist in the narrower sense, for example, to Moleschott, and necessarily is from their standpoint and profession, namely, the edifice itself. Backwards I fully agree with the materialists; but not forwards."

Here Feuerbach lumps together the materialism that is a general world outlook resting upon a definite conception of the relation between matter and mind, and the special form in which this world outlook was expressed at a definite historical stage, namely, in the eighteenth century. More than that, he lumps it with the shallow, vulgarized form in which the materialism of the eighteenth

century continues to exist today in the heads of naturalists and physicians, the form which was preached on their tours in the fifties by Büchner, Vogt and Moleschott. But just as idealism underwent a series of stages of development, so also did materialism. With each epoch-making discovery even in the sphere of natural science it has to change its form; and after history also was subjected to materialistic treatment, a new avenue of development has opened here too.

The materialism of the last century was predominantly mechanical, because at that time, of all natural sciences, only mechanics, and indeed only the mechanics of solid bodies—celestial and terrestrial—in short, the mechanics of gravity, had come to any definite close. Chemistry at that time existed only in its infantile, phlogistic form. Biology still lay in swaddling clothes; vegetable and animal organisms had been only roughly examined and were explained as the result of purely mechanical causes. What the animal was to Descartes, man was to the materialists of the eighteenth century—a machine. This exclusive application of the standards of mechanics to processes of a chemical and organic nature—in which processes the laws of mechanics are, indeed, also valid, but are pushed into the background by other, higher laws—constitutes the first specific but at that time inevitable limitation of classical French materialism.

The second specific limitation of this materialism lay in its inability to comprehend the universe as a process, as matter undergoing uninterrupted historical development. This was in accordance with the level of the natural science of that time, and with the metaphysical, that is, anti-dialectical manner of philosophizing connected with it. Nature, so much was known, was in eternal motion. But according to the ideas of that time, this motion turned, also eternally, in a circle and therefore never moved from the spot; it produced the same results over and over again. This conception was at that time inevitable. The Kantian theory of the origin of the solar system had been put forward but recently and was still regarded merely as a curiosity. The history of the development of the earth, geology, was still totally unknown, and the conception that the animate natural beings of today are the result of a long sequence of development from the simple to the complex could not at that time scientifically be put forward at all. The unhistorical view of nature was therefore inevitable. We have the less reason to reproach the philosophers of the eighteenth century on this account since the same thing is found in Hegel. According to him, nature, as a mere "alienation" of the idea, is incapable of development in time—capable only of extending its manifoldness in space,

so that it displays simultaneously and alongside of one another all the stages of development comprised in it, and is condemned to an eternal repetition of the same processes. This absurdity of a development in space, but outside of time—the fundamental condition of all development—Hegel imposes upon nature just at the very time when geology, embryology, the physiology of plants and animals, and organic chemistry were being built up, and when everywhere on the basis of these new sciences brilliant foreshadowings of the later theory of evolution were appearing (for instance, Goethe and Lamarck). But the system demanded it; hence the method, for the sake of the system, had to become untrue to itself.

This same unhistorical conception prevailed also in the domain of history. Here the struggle against the remnants of the Middle Ages blurred the view. The Middle Ages were regarded as a mere interruption of history by a thousand years of universal barbarism. The great progress made in the Middle Ages—the extension of the area of European culture, the viable great nations taking form there next to each other, and finally the enormous technical progress of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries—all this was not seen. Thus a rational insight into the great historical interconnections was made impossible, and history served at best as a collection of examples and illustrations for the use of philosophers.

The vulgarizing pedlars, who in Germany in the fifties dabbled in materialism, by no means overcame this limitation of their teachers. All the advances of natural science which had been made in the meantime served them only as new proofs against the existence of a creator of the world; and, indeed, they did not in the least make it their business to develop the theory any further. Though idealism was at the end of its tether and was dealt a death-blow by the Revolution of 1848, it had the satisfaction of seeing that materialism had for the moment fallen lower still. Feuerbach was unquestionably right when he refused to take responsibility for this materialism; only he should not have confounded the doctrines of these itinerant preachers with materialism in general.

Here, however, there are two things to be pointed out. First, even during Feuerbach's lifetime, natural science was still in that process of violent fermentation which only during the last fifteen years had reached a clarifying, relative conclusion. New scientific data were acquired to a hitherto unheard-of extent, but the establishing of interrelations, and thereby the bringing of order into this chaos of discoveries following closely upon each other's heels, has only quite recently become possible. It is true that Feuerbach had lived to see all three of the decisive discoveries—that of the cell, the transformation of energy and the theory of evolution named

after Darwin. But how could the lonely philosopher, living in rural solitude, be able sufficiently to follow scientific developments in order to appreciate at their full value discoveries which natural scientists themselves at that time either still contested or did not know how to make adequate use of? The blame for this falls solely upon the wretched conditions in Germany, in consequence of which cobweb-spinning eclectic flea-crackers had taken possession of the chairs of philosophy, while Feuerbach, who towered above them all, had to rusticate and grow sour in a little village. It is therefore not Feuerbach's fault that the historical conception of nature, which had now become possible and which removed all the one-sidedness of French materialism, remained inaccessible to him.

Secondly, Feuerbach is quite correct in asserting that exclusively natural-scientific materialism is indeed "the foundation of the edifice of human knowledge, but not the edifice itself." For we live not only in nature but also in human society, and this also no less than nature has its history of development and its science. It was therefore a question of bringing the science of society, that is, the sum total of the so-called historical and philosophical sciences, into harmony with the materialist foundation, and of reconstructing it thereupon. But it did not fall to Feuerbach's lot to do this. In spite of the "foundation," he remained here bound by the traditional idealist fetters, a fact which he recognizes in these words: "Backwards I agree with the materialists, but not forwards!" But it was Feuerbach himself who did not go "forwards" here, in the social domain, who did not get beyond his standpoint of 1840 or 1844. And this was again chiefly due to this reclusion which compelled him, who, of all philosophers, was the most inclined to social intercourse, to produce thoughts out of his solitary head instead of in amicable and hostile encounters with other men of his calibre. Later we shall see in detail how much he remained an idealist in this sphere.

It need only be added here that Starcke looks for Feuerbach's idealism in the wrong place. "Feuerbach is an idealist; he believes in the progress of mankind." (P. 19.) "The foundation, the substructure of the whole, remains nevertheless idealism. Realism for us is nothing more than a protection against aberrations, while we follow our ideal trends. Are not compassion, love and enthusiasm for truth and justice ideal forces?" (P. VIII.)

In the first place, idealism here means nothing but the pursuit of ideal aims. But these necessarily have to do at the most with Kantian idealism and its "categorical imperative"; however, Kant himself called his philosophy "transcendental idealism"; by no means because he dealt therein also with ethical ideals, but for quite

other reasons, as Starcke will remember. The superstition that philosophical idealism is pivoted round a belief in ethical, that is, social, ideals, arose outside philosophy, among the German philistines, who learned by heart from Schiller's poems the few morsels of philosophical culture they needed. No one has criticized more severely the impotent "categorical imperative" of Kant—impotent because it demands the impossible, and therefore never attains to any reality—no one has more cruelly derided the philistine sentimental enthusiasm for unrealizable ideals purveyed by Schiller than precisely the complete idealist Hegel. (See, for example, his *Phenomenology*.)

In the second place, we simply cannot get away from the fact that everything that sets men acting must find its way through their brains—even eating and drinking, which begins as a consequence of the sensation of hunger or thirst transmitted through the brain, and ends as a result of the sensation of satisfaction likewise transmitted through the brain. The influences of the external world upon man express themselves in his brain, are reflected therein as feelings, thoughts, impulses, volitions—in short, as "ideal tendencies," and in this form become "ideal powers." If, then, a man is to be deemed an idealist because he follows "ideal tendencies" and admits that "ideal powers" have an influence over him, then every person who is at all normally developed is a born idealist and how, in that case, can there still be any materialists?

In the third place, the conviction that humanity, at least at the present moment, moves on the whole in a progressive direction has absolutely nothing to do with the antagonism between materialism and idealism. The French materialists no less than the deists Voltaire and Rousseau held this conviction to an almost fanatical degree, and often enough made the greatest personal sacrifices for it. If ever anybody dedicated his whole life to the "enthusiasm for truth and justice"—using this phrase in the good sense—it was Diderot, for instance. If, therefore, Starcke declares all this to be idealism, this merely proves that the word materialism, and the whole antagonism between the two trends, has lost all meaning for him here.

The fact is that Starcke, although perhaps unconsciously, in this makes an unpardonable concession to the traditional philistine prejudice against the word materialism resulting from its long-continued defamation by the priests. By the word materialism the philistine understands gluttony, drunkenness, lust of the eye, lust of the flesh, arrogance, cupidity, avarice, covetousness, profit-hunting and stock-exchange swindling—in short, all the filthy vices in which he himself indulges in private. By the word idealism he

understands the belief in virtue, universal philanthropy and in a general way a "better world," of which he boasts before others but in which he himself at the utmost believes only so long as he is having the blues or is going through the bankruptcy consequent upon his customary "materialist" excesses. It is then that he sings his favourite song, What is man?—Half beast, half angel.

For the rest, Starcke takes great pains to defend Feuerbach against the attacks and doctrines of the vociferous assistant professors who today go by the name of philosophers in Germany. For people who are interested in this afterbirth of classical German philosophy this is, of course, a matter of importance; for Starcke himself it may have appeared necessary. We, however, will spare the reader this.

### III

The real idealism of Feuerbach becomes evident as soon as we come to his philosophy of religion and ethics. He by no means wishes to abolish religion; he wants to perfect it. Philosophy itself must be absorbed in religion. "The periods of humanity are distinguished only by religious changes. A historical movement is fundamental only when it is rooted in the hearts of men. The heart is not a form of religion, so that the latter should exist *also* in the heart; the heart is the essence of religion." (Quoted by Starcke, p. 168.) According to Feuerbach, religion is the relation between human beings based on the affections, the relation based on the heart, which relation until now has sought its truth in a fantastic mirror image of reality—in the mediation of one or many gods, the fantastic mirror images of human qualities—but now finds it directly and without any mediation in the love between "I" and "Thou." Thus, finally, with Feuerbach sex love becomes one of the highest forms, if not the highest form, of the practice of his new religion.

Now relations between man and man, based on affection, and especially between the two sexes, have existed as long as mankind has. Sex love in particular has undergone a development and won a place during the last eight hundred years which has made it a compulsory pivotal point of all poetry during this period. The existing positive religions have limited themselves to the bestowal of a higher consecration upon state-regulated sex love, that is, upon the marriage laws, and they could all disappear tomorrow without changing in the slightest the practice of love and friendship. Thus the Christian religion in France, as a matter of fact, so completely disappeared in the years 1793-98 that even Napoleon could not re-introduce it without opposition and difficulty; and this without

any need for a substitute, in Feuerbach's sense, making itself felt in the interval.

Feuerbach's idealism consists here in this: he does not simply accept mutual relations based on reciprocal inclination between human beings, such as sex love, friendship, compassion, self-sacrifice, etc., as what they are in themselves—without associating them with any particular religion which to him, too, belongs to the past; but instead he asserts that they will attain their full value only when consecrated by the name of religion. The chief thing for him is not that these purely human relations exist, but that they shall be conceived of as the new, true religion. They are to have full value only after they have been marked with a religious stamp. Religion is derived from *religare*<sup>1</sup> and meant originally a bond. Therefore, every bond between two people is a religion. Such etymological tricks are the last resort of idealist philosophy. Not what the word means according to the historical development of its actual use, but what it ought to mean according to its derivation is what counts. And so sex love and the intercourse between the sexes is apotheosized to a *religion*, merely in order that the word religion, which is so dear to idealistic memories, may not disappear from the language. The Parisian reformers of the Louis Blanc trend used to speak in precisely the same way in the forties. They likewise could conceive of a man without religion only as a monster, and used to say: "*Donc, l'athéisme c'est votre religion!*"<sup>2</sup> If Feuerbach wishes to establish a true religion upon the basis of an essentially materialist conception of nature, that is the same as regarding modern chemistry as true alchemy. If religion can exist without its god, alchemy can exist without its philosopher's stone. By the way, there exists a very close connection between alchemy and religion. The philosopher's stone has many godlike properties and the Egyptian-Greek alchemists of the first two centuries of our era had a hand in the development of Christian doctrines, as the data given by Kopp and Berthelot have proved.

Feuerbach's assertion that "the periods of humanity are distinguished only by religious changes" is decidedly false. Great historical turning points have been *accompanied* by religious changes only so far as the three world religions which have existed up to the present—Buddhism, Christianity and Islam—are concerned. The old tribal and national religions, which arose spontaneously, did not proselytize and lost all their power of resistance as soon as the independence of the tribe or people was lost. For the Germans

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<sup>1</sup> *Religare*: To bind.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> "Well, then atheism is your religion!"—*Ed.*



it was sufficient to have simple contact with the decaying Roman world empire and with its newly adopted Christian world religion which fitted its economic, political and ideological conditions. Only with these world religions, arisen more or less artificially, particularly Christianity and Islam, do we find that the more general historical movements acquire a religious imprint. Even in regard to Christianity the religious stamp in revolutions of really universal significance is restricted to the first stages of the bourgeoisie's struggle for emancipation—from the thirteenth to the seventeenth century—and is to be accounted for, not as Feuerbach thinks by the hearts of men and their religious needs, but by the entire previous history of the Middle Ages, which knew no other form of ideology than precisely religion and theology. But when the bourgeoisie of the eighteenth century was strengthened enough likewise to possess an ideology of its own, suited to its own class standpoint, it made its great and conclusive revolution, the French, appealing exclusively to juristic and political ideas, and troubling itself with religion only in so far as it stood in its way. But it never occurred to it to put a new religion in place of the old. Everyone knows how Robespierre failed in his attempt.<sup>1</sup>

The possibility of purely human sentiments in our intercourse with other human beings has nowadays been sufficiently curtailed by the society in which we must live, which is based upon class antagonism and class rule. We have no reason to curtail it still more by exalting these sentiments to a religion. And similarly the understanding of the great historical class struggles has already been sufficiently obscured by current historiography, particularly in Germany, so that there is also no need for us to make such an understanding totally impossible by transforming the history of these struggles into a mere appendix of ecclesiastical history. Already here it becomes evident how far today we have moved beyond Feuerbach. His "finest passages" in glorification of his new religion of love are totally unreadable today.

The only religion which Feuerbach examines seriously is Christianity, the world religion of the Occident, based upon monotheism. He proves that the Christian god is only a fantastic reflection, a mirror image, of man. Now, this god is, however, himself the product of a tedious process of abstraction, the concentrated quintessence of the numerous earlier tribal and national gods. And man, whose image this god is, is therefore also not a real man, but likewise the quintessence of the numerous real men, man in the ab-

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<sup>1</sup> The reference is to Robespierre's attempt to set up a religion of the "highest being."—*Ed.*

stract, therefore himself again a mental image. Feuerbach, who on every page preaches sensuousness, absorption in the concrete, in actuality, becomes thoroughly abstract as soon as he begins to talk of any other than mere sex relations between human beings.

Of these relations only one aspect appeals to him: morality. And here we are again struck by Feuerbach's astonishing poverty when compared with Hegel. The latter's ethics, or doctrine of moral conduct, is the philosophy of right and embraces: 1) abstract right; 2) morality; 3) social ethics [*Sittlichkeit*], under which again are comprised: the family, civil society and the state. Here the content is as realistic as the form is idealistic. Besides morality the whole sphere of law, economy, politics is here included. With Feuerbach it is just the reverse. In form he is realistic since he takes his start from man; but there is absolutely no mention of the world in which this man lives; hence, this man remains always the same abstract man who occupied the field in the philosophy of religion. For this man is not born of woman; he issues, as from a chrysalis, from the god of the monotheistic religions. He therefore does not live in a real world historically come into being and historically determined. True, he has intercourse with other men; however, each one of them is just as much an abstraction as he himself. In his philosophy of religion we still had men and women, but in his ethics even this last distinction disappears. Feuerbach, to be sure, at long intervals makes such statements as: "Man thinks differently in a palace and in a hut." "If because of hunger, of misery, you have no stuff in your body, you likewise have no stuff for morality in your head, in your mind or heart." "Politics must become our religion," etc. But Feuerbach is absolutely incapable of achieving anything with these maxims. They remain mere phrases, and even Starcke has to admit that for Feuerbach politics constituted an impassable frontier and the "science of society, sociology, was *terra incognita* to him."

He appears just as shallow, in comparison with Hegel, in his treatment of the antithesis of good and evil. "One believes one is saying something great," Hegel remarks, "if one says that 'man is naturally good.' But one forgets that one says something far greater when one says 'man is naturally evil.'" With Hegel evil is the form in which the motive force of historical development presents itself. This contains the twofold meaning that, on the one hand, each new advance necessarily appears as a sacrilege against things hallowed, as a rebellion against conditions, though old and moribund, yet sanctified by custom; and that, on the other hand, it is precisely the wicked passions of man—greed and lust for power—which, since the emergence of class antagonisms, serve as levers

of historical development—a fact of which the history of feudalism and of the bourgeoisie, for example, constitutes a single continual proof. But it does not occur to Feuerbach to investigate the historical role of moral evil. To him history is altogether an uncanny domain in which he feels ill at ease. Even his dictum: “Man as he sprang originally from nature was only a mere creature of nature, not a man. Man is a product of man, of culture, of history”—with him even this dictum remains absolutely sterile.

What Feuerbach has to tell us about morals can, therefore, only be extremely meagre. The urge towards happiness is innate in man, and must therefore form the basis of all morality. But the urge towards happiness is subject to a double correction. First, by the natural consequences of our actions: after the debauch come the “blues,” and habitual excess is followed by illness. Secondly, by its social consequences: if we do not respect the similar urge of other people towards happiness they will defend themselves, and so interfere with our own urge towards happiness. Consequently, in order to satisfy our urge, we must be in a position to appreciate rightly the results of our conduct and must likewise allow others an equal right to seek happiness. Rational self-restraint with regard to ourselves, and love—again and again love!—in our intercourse with others—these are the basic laws of Feuerbach’s morality; from them all others are derived. And neither the most spirited utterances of Feuerbach nor the strongest eulogies of Starcke can hide the tenuity and banality of these few propositions.

Only very exceptionally, and by no means to his and other people’s profit, can an individual satisfy his urge towards happiness by preoccupation with himself. Rather it requires preoccupation with the outside world, means to satisfy his needs, that is to say, food, an individual of the opposite sex, books, conversation, argument, activities, objects for use and working up. Feuerbach’s morality either presupposes that these means and objects of satisfaction are given to every individual as a matter of course, or else it offers only inapplicable good advice and is, therefore, not worth a brass farthing to people who are without these means. And Feuerbach himself states this in plain terms: “Man thinks differently in a palace and in a hut. If because of hunger, of misery, you have no stuff in your body, you likewise have no stuff for morality in your head, in your mind or heart.”

Do matters fare any better in regard to the equal right of others to satisfy their urge towards happiness? Feuerbach posed this claim as absolute, as holding good for all times and circumstances. But since when has it been valid? Was there ever in antiquity between slaves and masters, or in the Middle Ages between serfs and barons,

any talk about an equal right to the pursuit of happiness? Was not the urge towards happiness of the oppressed class sacrificed ruthlessly and "by right of law" to that of the ruling class? Yes, that was indeed immoral; nowadays, however, equality of rights is recognized. Recognized in words ever since and inasmuch as the bourgeoisie, in its fight against feudalism and in the development of capitalist production, was compelled to abolish all privileges of estate, that is, personal privileges, and to introduce the equality of all individuals before the law, first in the sphere of private law, then gradually also in the sphere of public law. But the urge towards happiness thrives only to a trivial extent on ideal rights. To the greatest extent of all it thrives on material means; and capitalist production takes care to ensure that the great majority of those with equal rights shall get only what is essential for bare existence. Capitalist production has, therefore, little more respect, if indeed any more, for the equal right to the pursuit of happiness of the majority than had slavery or serfdom. And are we better off in regard to the mental means of happiness, the educational means? Is not even "the schoolmaster of Sadowa"<sup>1</sup> a mythical person?

More. According to Feuerbach's theory of morals the Stock Exchange is the highest temple of moral conduct, provided only that one always speculates right. If my urge towards happiness leads me to the Stock Exchange, and if there I correctly gauge the consequences of my actions so that only agreeable results and no disadvantages ensue, that is, if I always win, then I am fulfilling Feuerbach's precept. Moreover, I do not thereby interfere with the equal right of another person to pursue his happiness; for that other man went to the Exchange just as voluntarily as I did and in concluding the speculative transaction with me he has followed his urge towards happiness as I have followed mine. If he loses his money, his action is *ipso facto* proved to have been unethical, because of his bad reckoning, and since I have given him the punishment he deserves, I can even slap my chest proudly, like a modern Rhadamanthus. Love, too, rules on the Stock Exchange, in so far as it is not simply a sentimental figure of speech, for each finds in others the satisfaction of his own urge towards happiness, which is just what love ought to achieve and how it acts in practice. And if I gamble with correct prevision of the consequences of my operations, and therefore with success, I fulfil all the strictest injunctions of

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<sup>1</sup> *The schoolmaster of Sadowa*: An expression currently used by German bourgeois publicists after the victory of the Prussians at Sadowa (in the Austro-Prussian War of 1866), the implication being that the Prussian victory was to be attributed to the superiority of the Prussian system of public education.—*Ed.*

Feuerbachian morality—and become a rich man into the bargain. In other words, Feuerbach's morality is cut exactly to the pattern of modern capitalist society, little as Feuerbach himself might desire or imagine it.

But love!—yes, with Feuerbach love is everywhere and at all times the wonder-working god who should help to surmount all difficulties of practical life—and at that in a society which is split into classes with diametrically opposite interests. At this point the last relic of its revolutionary character disappears from his philosophy, leaving only the old cant: Love one another—fall into each other's arms regardless of distinctions of sex or estate—a universal orgy of reconciliation!

In short, the Feuerbachian theory of morals fares like all its predecessors. It is designed to suit all periods, all peoples and all conditions, and precisely for that reason it is never and nowhere applicable. It remains, as regards the real world, as powerless as Kant's categorical imperative. In reality every class, even every profession, has its own morality, and even this it violates whenever it can do so with impunity. And love, which is to unite all, manifests itself in wars, altercations, lawsuits, domestic broils, divorces and every possible exploitation of one by another.

Now how was it possible that the powerful impetus given by Feuerbach turned out to be so unfruitful for himself? For the simple reason that Feuerbach himself never contrives to escape from the realm of abstraction—for which he has a deadly hatred—into that of living reality. He clings fiercely to nature and man; but nature and man remain mere words with him. He is incapable of telling us anything definite either about real nature or real men. But from the abstract man of Feuerbach one arrives at real living men only when one considers them as participants in history. And that is what Feuerbach resisted, and therefore the year 1848, which he did not understand, meant to him merely the final break with the real world, retirement into solitude. The blame for this again falls chiefly on the conditions then obtaining in Germany, which condemned him to rot away miserably.

But the step which Feuerbach did not take had nevertheless to be taken. The cult of abstract man, which formed the kernel of Feuerbach's new religion, had to be replaced by the science of real men and of their historical development. This further development of Feuerbach's standpoint beyond Feuerbach was inaugurated by Marx in 1845 in *The Holy Family*.

## IV

Strauss, Bauer, Stirner, Feuerbach—these were the offshoots of Hegelian philosophy, in so far as they did not abandon the field of philosophy. Strauss, after his *Life of Jesus* and *Dogmatics*, produced only literary studies in philosophy and ecclesiastical history after the fashion of Renan. Bauer only achieved something in the field of the history of the origin of Christianity, though what he did here was important. Stirner remained a curiosity, even after Bakunin blended him with Proudhon and labelled the blend “anarchism.” Feuerbach alone was of significance as a philosopher. But not only did philosophy—claimed to soar above all special sciences and to be the science of sciences connecting them—remain to him an impassable barrier, an inviolable holy thing, but as a philosopher, too, he stopped halfway, was a materialist below and an idealist above. He was incapable of disposing of Hegel through criticism; he simply threw him aside as useless, while he himself, compared with the encyclopedic wealth of the Hegelian system, achieved nothing positive beyond a turgid religion of love and a meagre, impotent morality.

Out of the dissolution of the Hegelian school, however, there developed still another tendency, the only one which has borne real fruit. And this tendency is essentially connected with the name of Marx.<sup>1</sup>

The separation from Hegelian philosophy was here also the result of a return to the materialist standpoint. That means it was resolved to comprehend the real world—nature and history—just as it presents itself to everyone who approaches it free from preconceived idealist crotchets. It was decided mercilessly to sacrifice every idealist crotchet which could not be brought into harmony

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<sup>1</sup> Here I may be permitted to make a personal explanation. Lately repeated reference has been made to my share in this theory, and so I can hardly avoid saying a few words here to settle this point. I cannot deny that both before and during my forty years' collaboration with Marx I had a certain independent share in laying the foundations of the theory, and more particularly in its elaboration. But the greater part of its leading basic principles, especially in the realm of economics and history, and, above all, their final trenchant formulation, belong to Marx. What I contributed—at any rate with the exception of my work in a few special fields—Marx could very well have done without me. What Marx accomplished I would not have achieved. Marx stood higher, saw farther, and took a wider and quicker view than all the rest of us. Marx was a genius; we others were at best talented. Without him the theory would not be by far what it is today. It therefore rightly bears his name. [Note by Engels.]

with the facts conceived in their own and not in a fantastic interconnection. And materialism means nothing more than this. But here the materialistic world outlook was taken really seriously for the first time and was carried through consistently—at least in its basic features—in all domains of knowledge concerned.

Hegel was not simply put aside. On the contrary, one started out from his revolutionary side, described above, from the dialectical method. But in its Hegelian form this method was unusable. According to Hegel, dialectics is the self-development of the concept. The absolute concept does not only exist—unknown where—from eternity, it is also the actual living soul of the whole existing world. It develops into itself through all the preliminary stages which are treated at length in the *Logic* and which are all included in it. Then it “alienates” itself by changing into nature, where, without consciousness of itself, disguised as the necessity of nature, it goes through a new development and finally comes again to self-consciousness in man. This self-consciousness then elaborates itself again in history from the crude form until finally the absolute concept again comes to itself completely in the Hegelian philosophy. According to Hegel, therefore, the dialectical development apparent in nature and history, that is, the causal interconnection of the progressive movement from the lower to the higher, which asserts itself through all zigzag movements and temporary retrogressions, is only a miserable copy of the self-movement of the concept going on from eternity, no one knows where, but at all events independently of any thinking human brain. This ideological perversion had to be done away with. We comprehended the concepts in our heads once more materialistically—as images [*Abbilder*] of real things instead of regarding the real things as images of this or that stage of the absolute concept. Thus dialectics reduced itself to the science of the general laws of motion, both of the external world and of human thought—two sets of laws which are identical in substance, but differ in their expression in so far as the human mind can apply them consciously, while in nature and also up to now for the most part in human history, these laws assert themselves unconsciously, in the form of external necessity, in the midst of an endless series of seeming accidents. Thereby the dialectic of concepts itself became merely the conscious reflex of the dialectical motion of the real world and thus the dialectic of Hegel was placed upon its head; or rather, turned off its head, on which it was standing, and placed upon its feet. And this materialist dialectic, which for years has been our best working tool and our sharpest weapon, was, remarkably enough, discovered not only by us but also, independ-

ently of us and even of Hegel, by a German worker, Joseph Dietzgen.<sup>1</sup>

In this way, however, the revolutionary side of Hegelian philosophy was again taken up and at the same time freed from the idealist trimmings which with Hegel had prevented its consistent execution. The great basic thought that the world is not to be comprehended as a complex of ready-made *things*, but as a complex of *processes*, in which the things apparently stable no less than their mind images in our heads, the concepts, go through an uninterrupted change of coming into being and passing away, in which, in spite of all seeming accidentality and of all temporary retrogression, a progressive development asserts itself in the end—this great fundamental thought has, especially since the time of Hegel, so thoroughly permeated ordinary consciousness that in this generality it is now scarcely ever contradicted. But to acknowledge this fundamental thought in words and to apply it in reality in detail to each domain of investigation are two different things. If, however, investigation always proceeds from this standpoint, the demand for final solutions and eternal truths ceases once for all; one is always conscious of the necessary limitation of all acquired knowledge, of the fact that it is conditioned by the circumstances in which it was acquired. On the other hand, one no longer permits oneself to be imposed upon by the antitheses, insuperable for the still common old metaphysics, between true and false, good and bad, identical and different, necessary and accidental. One knows that these antitheses have only a relative validity; that that which is recognized now as true has also its latent false side which will later manifest itself, just as that which is now regarded as false has also its true side by virtue of which it could previously be regarded as true. One knows that what is maintained to be necessary is composed of sheer accidents and that the so-called accidental is the form behind which necessity hides itself—and so on.

The old method of investigation and thought which Hegel calls "metaphysical," which preferred to investigate *things* as given, as fixed and stable, a method the relics of which still strongly haunt people's minds, had a great deal of historical justification in its day. It was necessary first to examine things before it was possible to examine processes. One had first to know what a particular thing was before one could observe the changes it was undergoing. And such was the case with natural science. The old metaphysics, which

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<sup>1</sup> See *Das Wesen der menschlichen Kopfarbeit, dargestellt von einem Handarbeiter* [The Nature of Human Brainwork, Described by a Manual Worker]. Hamburg, Meissner. [Note by Engels.]



accepted things as finished objects, arose from a natural science which investigated dead and living things as finished objects. But when this investigation had progressed so far that it became possible to take the decisive step forward of transition to the systematic investigation of the changes which these things undergo in nature itself, then the last hour of the old metaphysics struck in the realm of philosophy also. And in fact, while natural science up to the end of the last century was predominantly a *collecting* science, a science of finished things, in our century it is essentially a *classifying* science, a science of the processes, of the origin and development of these things and of the interconnection which binds all these natural processes into one great whole. Physiology, which investigates the processes occurring in plant and animal organisms; embryology, which deals with the development of individual organisms from germ to maturity; geology, which investigates the gradual formation of the earth's surface—all these are the offspring of our century.

But, above all, there are three great discoveries which have enabled our knowledge of the interconnection of natural processes to advance by leaps and bounds: first, the discovery of the cell as the unit from whose multiplication and differentiation the whole plant and animal body develops, so that not only is the development and growth of all higher organisms recognized to proceed according to a single general law, but also, in the capacity of the cell to change, the way is pointed out by which organisms can change their species and thus go through a more than individual development. Second, the transformation of energy, which has demonstrated to us that all the so-called forces operative in the first instance in inorganic nature—mechanical force and its complement, so-called potential energy, heat, radiation (light, or radiant heat), electricity, magnetism and chemical energy—are different forms of manifestation of universal motion, which pass into one another in definite proportions so that in place of a certain quantity of the one which disappears, a certain quantity of another makes its appearance and thus the whole motion of nature is reduced to this incessant process of transformation from one form into another. Finally, the proof which Darwin first developed in connected form that the stock of organic products of nature environing us today, including mankind, is the result of a long process of evolution from a few originally unicellular germs, and that these again have arisen from protoplasm or albumen, which came into existence by chemical means.

Thanks to these three great discoveries and the other immense advances in natural science, we have now arrived at the point where we can demonstrate the interconnection between the processes in

nature not only in particular spheres but also the interconnection of these particular spheres on the whole, and so can present in an approximately systematic form a comprehensive view of the interconnection in nature by means of the facts provided by empirical natural science itself. To furnish this comprehensive view was formerly the task of so-called natural philosophy. It could do this only by putting in place of the real but as yet unknown interconnections ideal, fancied ones, filling in the missing facts by figments of the mind and bridging the actual gaps merely in imagination. In the course of this procedure it conceived many brilliant ideas and foreshadowed many later discoveries, but it also produced a considerable amount of nonsense, which indeed could not have been otherwise. Today, when one needs to comprehend the results of natural scientific investigation only dialectically, that is, in the sense of their own interconnection, in order to arrive at a "system of nature" sufficient for our time; when the dialectical character of this interconnection is forcing itself against their will even into the metaphysically-trained minds of the natural scientists, today natural philosophy is finally disposed of. Every attempt at resurrecting it would be not only superfluous but a *step backwards*.

But what is true of nature, which is hereby recognized also as a historical process of development, is likewise true of the history of society in all its branches and of the totality of all sciences which occupy themselves with things human (and divine). Here, too, the philosophy of history, of right, of religion, etc., has consisted in the substitution of an interconnection fabricated in the mind of the philosopher for the real interconnection to be demonstrated in the events; has consisted in the comprehension of history as a whole as well as in its separate parts, as the gradual realization of ideas—and naturally always only the pet ideas of the philosopher himself. According to this, history worked unconsciously but of necessity towards a certain ideal goal set in advance—as, for example, in Hegel, towards the realization of his absolute idea—and the unalterable trend towards this absolute idea formed the inner interconnection in the events of history. A new mysterious providence—unconscious or gradually coming into consciousness—was thus put in the place of the real, still unknown interconnection. Here, therefore, just as in the realm of nature, it was necessary to do away with these fabricated, artificial interconnections by the discovery of the real ones—a task which ultimately amounts to the discovery of the general laws of motion which assert themselves as the ruling ones in the history of human society.

In one point, however, the history of the development of society proves to be essentially different from that of nature. In na-

ture—in so far as we ignore man's reaction upon nature—there are only blind, unconscious agencies acting upon one another, out of whose interplay the general law comes into operation. Nothing of all that happens—whether in the innumerable apparent accidents observable upon the surface, or in the ultimate results which confirm the regularity inherent in these accidents—happens as a consciously desired aim. In the history of society, on the contrary, the actors are all endowed with consciousness, are men acting with deliberation or passion, working towards definite goals; nothing happens without a conscious purpose, without an intended aim. But this distinction, important as it is for historical investigation, particularly of single epochs and events, cannot alter the fact that the course of history is governed by inner general laws. For here, also, on the whole, in spite of the consciously desired aims of all individuals, accident apparently reigns on the surface. That which is willed happens but rarely; in the majority of instances the numerous desired ends cross and conflict with one another, or these ends themselves are from the outset incapable of realization or the means of attaining them are insufficient. Thus the conflicts of innumerable individual wills and individual actions in the domain of history produces a state of affairs entirely analogous to that prevailing in the realm of unconscious nature. The ends of the actions are intended, but the results which actually follow from these actions are not intended; or when they do seem to correspond to the end intended, they ultimately have consequences quite other than those intended. Historical events thus appear on the whole to be likewise governed by chance. But where on the surface accident holds sway, there actually it is always governed by inner, hidden laws and it is only a matter of discovering these laws.

Men make their own history, whatever its outcome may be, in that each person follows his own consciously desired end, and it is precisely the resultant of these many wills operating in different directions and of their manifold effects upon the outer world that constitutes history. Thus it is also a question of what the many individuals desire. The will is determined by passion or deliberation. But the levers which immediately determine passion or deliberation are of very different kinds. Partly they may be external objects, partly ideal motives, ambition, "enthusiasm for truth and justice," personal hatred or even purely individual whims of all kinds. But, on the one hand, we have seen that the many individual wills active in history for the most part produce results quite other than those intended—often quite the opposite; that their motives, therefore, in relation to the total result are likewise of only secondary importance. On the other hand, the further question

arises: What driving forces in turn stand behind these motives? What are the historical causes which transform themselves into these motives in the brains of the actors?

The old materialism never put this question to itself. Its conception of history, in so far as it has one at all, is therefore essentially pragmatic; it judges everything according to the motives of the action; it divides men who act in history into noble and ignoble and then finds that as a rule the noble are defrauded and the ignoble are victorious. Hence, it follows for the old materialism that nothing very edifying is to be got from the study of history, and for us that in the realm of history the old materialism becomes untrue to itself because it takes the ideal driving forces which operate there as ultimate causes, instead of investigating what is behind them, what are the driving forces of these driving forces. The inconsistency does not lie in the fact that *ideal* driving forces are recognized, but in the investigation not being carried further back behind these into their motive causes. On the other hand, the philosophy of history, particularly as represented by Hegel, recognizes that the ostensible and also the really operating motives of men who act in history are by no means the ultimate causes of historical events; that behind these motives are other motive powers, which have to be discovered. But it does not seek these powers in history itself, it imports them rather from outside, from philosophical ideology, into history. Hegel, for example, instead of explaining the history of ancient Greece out of its own inner interconnections, simply maintains that it is nothing more than the working out of "forms of beautiful individuality," the realization of a "work of art" as such. He says much in this connection about the old Greeks that is fine and profound, but that does not prevent us today from refusing to be put off with such an explanation, which is a mere manner of speech.

When, therefore, it is a question of investigating the driving powers which—consciously or unconsciously, and indeed very often unconsciously—lie behind the motives of men who act in history and which constitute the real ultimate driving forces of history, then it is not a question so much of the motives of single individuals, however eminent, as of those motives which set in motion great masses, whole peoples, and again whole classes of the people in each people; and this, too, not momentarily, for the transient flaring up of a straw-fire which quickly dies down, but for a lasting action resulting in a great historical transformation. To ascertain the driving causes which here in the minds of acting masses and their leaders—the so-called great men—are reflected as conscious motives, clearly or unclearly, directly or in ideological, even

glorified form—that is the only path which can put us on the track of the laws holding sway both in history as a whole, and at particular periods and in particular lands. Everything which sets men in motion must go through their minds; but what form it will take in the mind will depend very much upon the circumstances. The workers have by no means become reconciled to capitalist machine industry, even though they no longer simply break the machines to pieces as they still did in 1848 on the Rhine.

But while in all earlier periods the investigation of these driving causes of history was almost impossible—on account of the complicated and concealed interconnections between them and their effects—our present period has so far simplified these interconnections that the riddle could be solved. Since the establishment of large-scale industry, that is, at least since the European peace of 1815, it has been no longer a secret to any man in England that the whole political struggle there turned on the claims to supremacy of two classes: the landed aristocracy and the bourgeoisie (middle class). In France, with the return of the Bourbons, the same fact was perceived; the historians of the Restoration period, from Thierry to Guizot, Mignet and Thiers, speak of it everywhere as the key to the understanding of all French history since the Middle Ages. And since 1830 the working class, the proletariat, has been recognized in both countries as a third competitor for power. Conditions had become so simplified that one would have had to close one's eyes deliberately not to see in the fight of these three great classes and in the conflict of their interests the driving force of modern history—at least in the two most advanced countries.

But how did these classes come into existence? If it was possible at first glance still to ascribe the origin of the great, formerly feudal landed property—at least in the first instance—to political causes, to taking possession by force, this could not be done in regard to the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Here the origin and development of two great classes was seen to lie clearly and palpably in purely economic causes. And it was just as clear that in the struggle between landed property and the bourgeoisie, no less than in the struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, it was a question, first and foremost, of economic interests, to the furtherance of which political power was intended to serve merely as a means. Bourgeoisie and proletariat both arose in consequence of a transformation of the economic conditions, more precisely, of the mode of production. The transition, first from guild handicrafts to manufacture, and then from manufacture to large-scale industry, with steam and mechanical power, had caused the development of these two classes. At a certain stage the new productive forces set in mo-

tion by the bourgeoisie—in the first place the division of labour and the combination of many detail labourers [*Teilarbeiter*] in one general manufactory—and the conditions and requirements of exchange, developed through these productive forces, became incompatible with the existing order of production handed down by history and sanctified by law, that is to say, incompatible with the privileges of the guild and the numerous other personal and local privileges (which were only so many fetters to the unprivileged estates) of the feudal order of society. The productive forces represented by the bourgeoisie rebelled against the order of production represented by the feudal landlords and the guildmasters. The result is known: the feudal fetters were smashed, gradually in England, at one blow in France. In Germany the process is not yet finished. But just as, at a definite stage of its development, manufacture came into conflict with the feudal order of production, so now large-scale industry has already come into conflict with the bourgeois order of production established in its place. Tied down by this order, by the narrow limits of the capitalist mode of production, this industry produces, on the one hand, an ever-increasing proletarianization of the great mass of the people, and on the other hand, an ever greater mass of unsaleable products. Overproduction and mass misery, each the cause of the other—that is the absurd contradiction which is its outcome, and which of necessity calls for the liberation of the productive forces by means of a change in the mode of production.

In modern history at least it is, therefore, proved that all political struggles are class struggles, and all class struggles for emancipation, despite their necessarily political form—for every class struggle is a political struggle—turn ultimately on the question of *economic* emancipation. Therefore, here at least, the state—the political order—is the subordinate, and civil society—the realm of economic relations—the decisive element. The traditional conception, to which Hegel, too, pays homage, saw in the state the determining element, and in civil society the element determined by it. Appearances correspond to this. As all the driving forces of the actions of any individual person must pass through his brain, and transform themselves into motives of his will in order to set him into action, so also all the needs of civil society—no matter which class happens to be the ruling one—must pass through the will of the state in order to secure general validity in the form of laws. That is the formal aspect of the matter—the one which is self-evident. The question arises, however, what is the content of this merely formal will—of the individual as well as of the state—and whence is this content derived? Why is just this willed and not

something else? If we enquire into this we discover that in modern history the will of the state is, on the whole, determined by the changing needs of civil society, by the supremacy of this or that class, in the last resort, by the development of the productive forces and relations of exchange.

But if even in our modern era, with its gigantic means of production and communication, the state is not an independent domain with an independent development, but one whose existence as well as development is to be explained in the last resort by the economic conditions of life of society, then this must be still more true of all earlier times when the production of the material life of man was not yet carried on with these abundant auxiliary means, and when, therefore, the necessity of such production must have exercised a still greater mastery over men. If the state even today, in the era of big industry and of railways, is on the whole only a reflex, in concentrated form, of the economic needs of the class controlling production, then this must have been much more so in an epoch when each generation of men was forced to spend a far greater part of its aggregate lifetime in satisfying material needs, and was therefore much more dependent on them than we are today. An examination of the history of earlier periods, as soon as it is seriously undertaken from this angle, most abundantly confirms this. But, of course, this cannot be gone into here.

If the state and public law are determined by economic relations, so, too, of course is private law, which indeed in essence only sanctions the existing economic relations between individuals which are normal in the given circumstances. The form in which this happens can, however, vary considerably. It is possible, as happened in England, in harmony with the whole national development, to retain in the main the forms of the old feudal laws while giving them a bourgeois content; in fact, directly reading a bourgeois meaning into the feudal name. But, also, as happened in western continental Europe, Roman Law, the first world law of a commodity-producing society, with its unsurpassably fine elaboration of all the essential legal relations of simple commodity owners (of buyers and sellers, debtors and creditors, contracts, obligations, etc.) can be taken as the foundation. In which case, for the benefit of a still petty-bourgeois and semi-feudal society, it can either be reduced to the level of such a society simply through judicial practice (common law) or, with the help of allegedly enlightened, moralizing jurists it can be worked into a special code of law to correspond with such social level—a code which in these circumstances will be a bad one also from the legal standpoint (for instance, Prussian *Landrecht*). In which case, however, after a great bourgeois revolution, it is

also possible for such a classic law code of bourgeois society as the French *Code Civil* to be worked out upon the basis of this same Roman Law. If, therefore, bourgeois legal rules merely express the economic life conditions of society in legal form, then they can do so well or ill according to circumstances.

The state presents itself to us as the first ideological power over mankind. Society creates for itself an organ for the safeguarding of its common interests against internal and external attacks. This organ is the state power. Hardly come into being, this organ makes itself independent *vis-à-vis* society; and, indeed, the more so, the more it becomes the organ of a particular class, the more it directly enforces the supremacy of that class. The fight of the oppressed class against the ruling class becomes necessarily a political fight, a fight first of all against the political dominance of this class. The consciousness of the interconnection between this political struggle and its economic basis becomes dulled and can be lost altogether. While this is not wholly the case with the participants, it almost always happens with the historians. Of the ancient sources on the struggles within the Roman Republic only Appian tells us clearly and distinctly what was at issue in the last resort—namely, landed property.

But once the state has become an independent power *vis-à-vis* society, it produces forthwith a further ideology. It is indeed among professional politicians, theorists of public law and jurists of private law that the connection with economic facts gets lost for fair. Since in each particular case the economic facts must assume the form of juristic motives in order to receive legal sanction; and since, in so doing, consideration of course has to be given to the whole legal system already in operation, the juristic form is, in consequence, made everything and the economic content nothing. Public law and private law are treated as independent spheres, each, having its own independent historical development, each being capable of and needing a systematic presentation by the consistent elimination of all inner contradictions.

Still higher ideologies, that is, such as are still further removed from the material, economic basis, take the form of philosophy and religion. Here the interconnection between conceptions and their material conditions of existence becomes more and more complicated, more and more obscured by intermediate links. But the interconnection exists. Just as the whole Renaissance period, from the middle of the fifteenth century, was an essential product of the towns and, therefore, of the burghers, so also was the subsequently newly awakened philosophy. Its content was in essence only the philosophical expression of the thoughts corresponding to the development



of the small and middle burghers into a big bourgeoisie. Among last century's Englishmen and Frenchmen who in many cases were just as much political economists as philosophers, this is clearly evident; and we have proved it above in regard to the Hegelian school.

We will now in addition deal only briefly with religion, since the latter stands furthest away from material life and seems to be most alien to it. Religion arose in very primitive times from erroneous, primitive conceptions of men about their own nature and external nature surrounding them. Every ideology, however, once it has arisen, develops in connection with the given concept-material, and develops this material further; otherwise it would not be an ideology, that is, occupation with thoughts as with independent entities, developing independently and subject only to their own laws. That the material life conditions of the persons inside whose heads this thought process goes on in the last resort determine the course of this process remains of necessity unknown to these persons, for otherwise there would be an end to all ideology. These original religious notions, therefore, which in the main are common to each group of kindred peoples, develop, after the group separates, in a manner peculiar to each people, according to the conditions of life falling to their lot. For a number of groups of peoples, and particularly for the Aryans (so-called Indo-Europeans) this process has been shown in detail by comparative mythology. The gods thus fashioned within each people were national gods, whose domain extended no farther than the national territory which they were to protect; on the other side of its boundaries other gods held undisputed sway. They could continue to exist, in imagination, only as long as the nation existed; they fell with its fall. The Roman world empire, the economic conditions of whose origin we do not need to examine here, brought about this downfall of the old nationalities. The old national gods decayed, even those of the Romans, which also were patterned to suit only the narrow confines of the city of Rome. The need to complement the world empire by means of a world religion was clearly revealed in the attempts made to provide in Rome recognition and altars for all the foreign gods to the slightest degree respectable alongside of the indigenous ones. But a new world religion is not to be made in this fashion, by imperial decree. The new world religion, Christianity, had already quietly come into being, out of a mixture of generalized Oriental, particularly Jewish, theology, and vulgarized Greek, particularly Stoic, philosophy. What it originally looked like has to be first laboriously discovered, since its official form, as it has been handed down to us, is merely that in which it became the state religion, to which purpose it

was adapted by the Council of Nicaea. The fact that already after 250 years it became the state religion suffices to show that it was the religion in correspondence with the conditions of the time. In the Middle Ages, in the same measure as feudalism developed, Christianity grew into the religious counterpart to it, with a corresponding feudal hierarchy. And when the burghers began to thrive, there developed, in opposition to feudal Catholicism, the Protestant heresy, which first appeared in Southern France, among the Albigenses,<sup>1</sup> at the time the cities there reached the highest point of their florescence. The Middle Ages had attached to theology all the other forms of ideology—philosophy, politics, jurisprudence—and made them subdivisions of theology. It thereby constrained every social and political movement to take on a theological form. The sentiments of the masses were fed with religion to the exclusion of all else; it was therefore necessary to put forward their own interests in a religious guise in order to produce an impetuous movement. And just as the burghers from the beginning brought into being an appendage of propertyless urban plebeians, day labourers and servants of all kinds, belonging to no recognized social estate, precursors of the later proletariat, so likewise heresy soon became divided into a burgher-moderate heresy and a plebeian-revolutionary one, the latter an abomination to the burgher heretics themselves.

The ineradicability of the Protestant heresy corresponded to the invincibility of the rising burghers. When these burghers had become sufficiently strengthened, their struggle against the feudal nobility, which till then had been predominantly local, began to assume national dimensions. The first great action occurred in Germany—the so-called Reformation. The burghers were neither powerful enough nor sufficiently developed to be able to unite under their banner the remaining rebellious estates—the plebeians of the towns, the lower nobility and the peasants on the land. At first the nobles were defeated; the peasants rose in a revolt which formed the peak of the whole revolutionary struggle; the cities left them in the lurch, and thus the revolution succumbed to the armies of the secular princes who reaped the whole profit. Thenceforward Germany disappears for three centuries from the ranks of countries playing an independent active part in history. But beside the German Luther appeared the Frenchman Calvin. With true French acuity he put the bourgeois character of the Reformation in the forefront, repub-

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<sup>1</sup> *Albigenses*: A religious sect which during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries directed a movement against the Roman Catholic Church. The name is derived from the town of Albi, in the south of France.—*Ed.*

licanized and democratized the church. While the Lutheran Reformation in Germany degenerated and reduced the country to rack and ruin, the Calvinist Reformation served as a banner for the republicans in Geneva, in Holland and in Scotland, freed Holland from Spain and from the German Empire and provided the ideological costume for the second act of the bourgeois revolution, which was taking place in England. Here Calvinism justified itself as the true religious disguise of the interests of the bourgeoisie of that time, and on this account did not attain full recognition when the revolution ended in 1689 in a compromise between one part of the nobility and the bourgeoisie. The English state church was re-established; but not in its earlier form of a Catholicism which had the king for its pope, being, instead, strongly Calvinized. The old state church had celebrated the merry Catholic Sunday and had fought against the dull Calvinist one. The new, bourgeoisified church introduced the latter, which adorns England to this day.

In France, the Calvinist minority was suppressed in 1685 and either Catholicized or driven out of the country. But what was the good? Already at that time the freethinker Pierre Bayle was at the height of his activity, and in 1694 Voltaire was born. The forcible measures of Louis XIV only made it easier for the French bourgeoisie to carry through its revolution in the irreligious, exclusively political form which alone was suited to a developed bourgeoisie. Instead of Protestants, freethinkers took their seats in the national assemblies. Thereby Christianity entered into its final stage. It had become incapable for the future of serving any progressive class as the ideological garb of its aspirations. It became more and more the exclusive possession of the ruling classes and these apply it as a mere means of government, to keep the lower classes within bounds. Moreover, each of the different classes uses its own appropriate religion: the landed nobility—Catholic Jesuitism or Protestant orthodoxy; the liberal and radical bourgeoisie—rationalism; and it makes little difference whether these gentlemen themselves believe in their respective religions or not.

We see, therefore: religion, once formed, always contains traditional material, just as in all ideological domains tradition forms a great conservative force. But the transformations which this material undergoes spring from class relations, that is to say, out of the economic relations of the people who execute these transformations. And here that is sufficient.

In the above it could only be a question of giving a general sketch of the Marxist conception of history, at most with a few illustrations, as well. The proof must be derived from history itself; and in this regard I may be permitted to say that it has been

sufficiently furnished in other writings. This conception, however, puts an end to philosophy in the realm of history, just as the dialectical conception of nature makes all natural philosophy both unnecessary and impossible. It is no longer a question anywhere of inventing interconnections from out of our brains, but of discovering them in the facts. For philosophy, which has been expelled from nature and history, there remains only the realm of pure thought, so far as it is left: the theory of the laws of the thought process itself, logic and dialectics.

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With the Revolution of 1848, "educated" Germany said farewell to theory and went over to the field of practice. Small production and manufacture, based upon manual labour, were superseded by real large-scale industry. Germany again appeared on the world market. The new little German Empire<sup>1</sup> abolished at least the most crying of the abuses with which this development had been obstructed by the system of petty states, the relics of feudalism, and bureaucratic management. But to the same degree that speculation abandoned the philosopher's study in order to set up its temple in the Stock Exchange, educated Germany lost the great aptitude for theory which had been the glory of Germany in the days of its deepest political humiliation—the aptitude for purely scientific investigation, irrespective of whether the result obtained was practically applicable or not, whether likely to offend the police authorities or not. Official German natural science, it is true, maintained its position in the front rank, particularly in the field of specialized research. But even the American journal *Science* rightly remarks that the decisive advances in the sphere of the comprehensive correlation of particular facts and their generalization into laws are now being made much more in England, instead of, as formerly, in Germany. And in the sphere of the historical sciences, philosophy included, the old fearless zeal for theory has now disappeared completely, along with classical philosophy. Inane eclecticism and an anxious concern for career and income, descending to the most vulgar job-hunting, occupy its place. The official representatives of these sciences have become the undisguised ideologists of the bourgeoisie and the existing state—but at a time when both stand in open antagonism to the working class.

Only among the working class does the German aptitude for theory remain unimpaired. Here it cannot be exterminated. Here

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<sup>1</sup> This term is applied to the German Empire (without Austria) that arose in 1871 under Prussia's hegemony.—Ed.

there is no concern for careers, for profit-making, or for gracious patronage from above. On the contrary, the more ruthlessly and disinterestedly science proceeds the more it finds itself in harmony with the interests and aspirations of the workers. The new tendency, which recognized that the key to the understanding of the whole history of society lies in the history of the development of labour, from the outset addressed itself by preference to the working class and here found the response which it neither sought nor expected from officially recognized science. The German working-class movement is the inheritor of German classical philosophy.

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Translated from the German

*Karl Marx*

## THESES ON FEUERBACH

### I

The chief defect of all hitherto existing materialism—that of Feuerbach included—is that the thing [*Gegenstand*], reality, sensuousness, is conceived only in the form of the *object* [*Objekt*] or of *contemplation* [*Anschauung*], but not as *human sensuous activity, practice*, not subjectively. Hence it happened that the *active* side, in contradistinction to materialism, was developed by idealism—but only abstractly, since, of course, idealism does not know real, sensuous activity as such. Feuerbach wants sensuous objects, really differentiated from the thought objects, but he does not conceive human activity itself as *objective* [*gegenständliche*] activity. Hence, in the *Essence of Christianity*, he regards the theoretical attitude as the only genuinely human attitude, while practice is conceived and fixed only in its dirty-judaical form of appearance. Hence he does not grasp the significance of “revolutionary,” of “practical-critical,” activity.

### II

The question whether objective [*gegenständliche*] truth can be attributed to human thinking is not a question of theory but is a *practical* question. In practice man must prove the truth, that is, the reality and power, the this-sidedness [*Diesseitigkeit*] of his thinking. The dispute over the reality or non-reality of thinking which is isolated from practice is a purely *scholastic* question.

### III

The materialist doctrine that men are products of circumstances and upbringing, and that, therefore, changed men are products of other circumstances and changed upbringing, forgets that it is men that change circumstances and that the educator must himself be

educated. Hence, this doctrine necessarily arrives at dividing society into two parts, of which one is superior to society (in Robert Owen, for example).

The coincidence of the changing of circumstances and of human activity can be conceived and rationally understood only as *revolutionizing practice*.

#### IV

Feuerbach starts out from the fact of religious self-alienation, the duplication of the world into a religious, imaginary world and a real one. His work consists in the dissolution of the religious world into its secular basis. He overlooks the fact that after completing this work, the chief thing still remains to be done. For the fact that the secular foundation detaches itself from itself and establishes itself in the clouds as an independent realm is really only to be explained by the self-cleavage and self-contradictoriness of this secular basis. The latter must itself, therefore, first be understood in its contradiction and then, by the removal of the contradiction, revolutionized in practice. Thus, for instance, once the earthly family is discovered to be the secret of the holy family, the former must then itself be criticized in theory and revolutionized in practice.

#### V

Feuerbach, not satisfied with *abstract thinking*, appeals to *sensuous contemplation*; but he does not conceive sensuousness as *practical*, human-sensuous activity.

#### VI

Feuerbach resolves the religious essence into the *human* essence. But the human essence is no abstraction inherent in each single individual. In its reality it is the ensemble of the social relations.

Feuerbach, who does not enter upon a criticism of this real essence, is consequently compelled:

1. To abstract from the historical process and to fix the religious sentiment [*Gemüt*] as something by itself and to presuppose an abstract—*isolated*—human individual.

2. The human essence, therefore, can with him be comprehended only as "genus," as an internal, dumb generality which merely *naturally* unites the many individuals.

## VII

Feuerbach, consequently, does not see that the "religious sentiment" is itself a *social product*, and that the abstract individual whom he analyzes belongs in reality to a particular form of society.

## VIII

Social life is essentially *practical*. All mysteries which mislead theory to mysticism find their rational solution in human practice and in the comprehension of this practice.

## IX

The highest point attained by *contemplative* materialism, that is, materialism which does not understand sensuousness as practical activity, is the contemplation of single individuals in "civil society."

## X

The standpoint of the old materialism is "*civil*" society; the standpoint of the new is *human* society, or socialized humanity.

## XI

The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to *change* it.

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of 1845

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Feuerbach*

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checked with the ms. of Karl Marx

Translated from the German



*Frederick Engels*

**PREFACE TO THE CONDITION  
OF THE WORKING-CLASS IN ENGLAND  
IN 1844**

The book, an English translation of which is here republished, was first issued in Germany in 1845. The author, at that time, was young, twenty-four years of age, and his production bears the stamp of his youth with its good and its faulty features, of neither of which he feels ashamed. It was translated into English, in 1885, by an American lady, Mrs. F. Kelley Wischnewetzky, and published in the following year in New York. The American edition being as good as exhausted, and having never been extensively circulated on this side of the Atlantic, the present English copyright edition is brought out with the full consent of all parties interested.

For the American edition, a new Preface and then Appendix were written in English by the author. The first had little to do with the book itself; it discussed the American Working-Class Movement of the day, and is, therefore, here omitted as irrelevant; the second—the original Preface—is largely made use of in the present introductory remarks.

The state of things described in this book belongs to-day, in many respects, to the past, as far as England is concerned. Though not expressly stated in our recognised treatises, it is still a law of modern Political Economy that the larger the scale on which Capitalistic Production is carried on, the less can it support the petty devices of swindling and pilfering which characterise its early stages. The pettifogging business tricks of the Polish Jew, the representative in Europe of commerce in its lowest stage, those tricks that serve him so well in his own country, and are generally practised there, he finds to be out of date and out of place when he comes to Hamburg or Berlin; and, again, the commission agent who hails from Berlin or Hamburg, Jew or Christian, after frequenting the Manchester Exchange for a few months, finds out that in order to

buy cotton yarn or cloth cheap, he, too, had better drop those slightly more refined but still miserable wiles and subterfuges which are considered the acme of cleverness in his native country. The fact is, those tricks do not pay any longer in a large market, where time is money, and where a certain standard of commercial morality is unavoidably developed, purely as a means of saving time and trouble. And it is the same with the relation between the manufacturer and his "hands."

The revival of trade, after the crisis of 1847, was the dawn of a new industrial epoch. The repeal of the Corn Laws and the financial reforms subsequent thereon gave to English industry and commerce all the elbow-room they had asked for. The discovery of the Californian and Australian gold-fields followed in rapid succession. The colonial markets developed at an increasing rate their capacity for absorbing English manufactured goods. In India millions of hand-weavers were finally crushed out by the Lancashire power-loom. China was more and more being opened up. Above all, the United States—then, commercially speaking, a mere colonial market, but by far the biggest of them all—underwent an economic development astounding even for that rapidly progressive country. And, finally, the new means of communication introduced at the close of the preceding period—railways and ocean steamers—were now worked out on an international scale; they realised actually what had hitherto existed only potentially, a world-market. This world-market, at first, was composed of a number of chiefly or entirely agricultural countries grouped around one manufacturing centre—England—which consumed the greater part of their surplus raw produce, and supplied them in return with the greater part of their requirements in manufactured articles. No wonder England's industrial progress was colossal and unparalleled, and such that the status of 1844 now appears to us as comparatively primitive and insignificant. And in proportion as this increase took place, in the same proportion did manufacturing industry become apparently moralised. The competition of manufacturer against manufacturer by means of petty thefts upon the workpeople did no longer pay. Trade had outgrown such low means of making money; they were not worth while practising for the manufacturing millionaire, and served merely to keep alive the competition of smaller traders, thankful to pick up a penny wherever they could. Thus the truck system was suppressed, the 'Ten Hours' Bill was enacted, and a number of other secondary reforms introduced—much against the spirit of Free Trade and unbridled competition, but quite as much in favour of the giant-capitalist in his competition with his less favoured brother. Moreover, the larger the concern, and with it the number

of hands, the greater the loss and inconvenience caused by every conflict between master and men; and thus a new spirit came over the masters, especially the large ones, which taught them to avoid unnecessary squabbles, to acquiesce in the existence and power of Trades' Unions, and finally even to discover in strikes—at opportune times—a powerful means to serve their own ends. The largest manufacturers, formerly the leaders of the war against the working-class, were now the foremost to preach peace and harmony. And for a very good reason. The fact is that all these concessions to justice and philanthropy were nothing else but means to accelerate the concentration of capital in the hands of the few, for whom the niggardly extra extortions of former years had lost all importance and had become actual nuisances; and to crush all the quicker and all the safer their smaller competitors, who could not make both ends meet without such perquisites. Thus the development of production on the basis of the capitalistic system has of itself sufficed—at least in the leading industries, for in the more unimportant branches this is far from being the case—to do away with all those minor grievances which aggravated the workman's fate during its earlier stages. And thus it renders more and more evident the great central fact that the cause of the miserable condition of the working-class is to be sought, not in these minor grievances, but *in the capitalistic system itself*. The wage-worker sells to the capitalist his labour-force for a certain daily sum. After a few hours' work he has reproduced the value of that sum; but the substance of his contract is that he has to work another series of hours to complete his working day; and the value he produces during these additional hours of surplus labour is surplus value, which cost the capitalist nothing, but yet goes into his pocket. That is the basis of the system which tends more and more to split up civilised society into a few Rothschilds and Vanderbilts, the owners of all the means of production and subsistence, on the one hand, and an immense number of wage-workers, the owners of nothing but their labour-force, on the other. And that this result is caused, not by this or that secondary grievance, but by the system itself—this fact has been brought out in bold relief by the development of Capitalism in England since 1847.

Again, the repeated visitations of cholera, typhus, small-pox and other epidemics have shown the British bourgeois the urgent necessity of sanitation in his towns and cities, if he wishes to save himself and family from falling victims to such diseases. Accordingly, the most crying abuses described in this book have either disappeared or have been made less conspicuous. Drainage has been introduced or improved, wide avenues have been opened out athwart

many of the worst "slums" I had to describe. "Little Ireland"<sup>1</sup> had disappeared, and the "Seven Dials"<sup>2</sup> are next on the list for sweeping away. But what of that? Whole districts which in 1844 I could describe as almost idyllic have now, with the growth of the towns, fallen into the same state of dilapidation, discomfort, and misery. Only the pigs and the heaps of refuse are no longer tolerated. The bourgeoisie have made further progress in the art of hiding the distress of the working-class. But that, in regard to their dwellings, no substantial improvement has taken place is amply proved by the Report of the Royal Commission "on the Housing of the Poor," 1885. And this is the case, too, in other respects. Police regulations have been plentiful as blackberries; but they can only hedge in the distress of the workers, they cannot remove it.

But while England has thus outgrown the juvenile state of capitalist exploitation described by me, other countries have only just attained it. France, Germany, and especially America, are the formidable competitors who, at this moment—as foreseen by me in 1844—are more and more breaking up England's industrial monopoly. Their manufactures are young as compared with those of England, but increasing at a far more rapid rate than the latter; and, curious enough, they have at this moment arrived at about the same phase of development as English manufacture in 1844. With regard to America, the parallel is indeed most striking. True, the external surroundings in which the working-class is placed in America are very difficult, but the same economical laws are at work, and the results, if not identical in every respect, must still be of the same order. Hence we find in America the same struggles for a shorter working-day, for a legal limitation of the working-time, especially of women and children in factories; we find the truck-system in full blossom, and the cottage-system, in rural districts, made use of by the "bosses" as a means of domination over the workers. When I received, in 1886, the American papers with accounts of the great strike of 12,000 Pennsylvania coal-miners in the Connellsville district, I seemed but to read my own description of the North of England colliers' strike of 1844. The same cheating of the workpeople by false measure; the same truck-system; the same attempt to break the miners' resistance by the capitalists' last, but crushing, resource—the eviction of the men out of their dwellings, the cottages owned by the companies.

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<sup>1</sup> *Little Ireland*: In the forties of the nineteenth century one of the most wretched working-class districts in Manchester.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> *Seven Dials*: Workers' quarter in the centre of London.—*Ed.*

I have not attempted, in this translation, to bring the book up to date, or to point out in detail all the changes that have taken place since 1844. And for two reasons: Firstly, to do this properly, the size of the book must be about doubled; and, secondly, the first volume of *Das Kapital*, by Karl Marx, an English translation of which is before the public, contains a very ample description of the state of the British working-class as it was about 1865, that is to say, at the time when British industrial prosperity reached its culminating point. I should, then, have been obliged again to go over the ground already covered by Marx's celebrated work.

It will be hardly necessary to point out that the general theoretical standpoint of this book—philosophical, economical, political—does not exactly coincide with my standpoint of to-day. Modern international Socialism, since fully developed as a science, chiefly and almost exclusively through the efforts of Marx, did not as yet exist in 1844. My book represents one of the phases of its embryonic development; and as the human embryo, in its early stages, still reproduces the gill arches of our fish ancestors, so this book exhibits everywhere the traces of the descent of modern Socialism from one of its ancestors, German philosophy. Thus great stress is laid on the dictum that Communism is not a mere party doctrine of the working-class, but a theory compassing the emancipation of society at large, including the capitalist class, from its present narrow conditions. This is true enough in the abstract, but absolutely useless, and sometimes worse, in practice. So long as the wealthy classes not only do not feel the want of any emancipation, but strenuously oppose the self-emancipation of the working-class, so long the social revolution will have to be prepared and fought out by the working-class alone. The French bourgeois of 1789, too, declared the emancipation of the bourgeoisie to be the emancipation of the whole human race; but the nobility and clergy would not see it; the proposition—though for the time being, with respect to feudalism, an abstract historical truth—soon became a mere sentimentalism, and disappeared from view altogether in the fire of the revolutionary struggle. And to-day, the very people who, from the "impartiality" of their superior standpoint, preach to the workers a Socialism soaring high above their class interests and class struggles, and tending to reconcile in a higher humanity the interests of both the contending classes—these people are either neophytes, who have still to learn a great deal, or they are the worst enemies of the workers—wolves in sheep's clothing.

The recurring period of the great industrial crisis is stated in the text as five years. This was the period apparently indicated by the course of events from 1825 to 1842. But the industrial history

from 1842 to 1868 has shown that the real period is one of ten years; that the intermediate revulsions were secondary, and tended more and more to disappear. Since 1868 the state of things has changed again, of which more anon.

I have taken care not to strike out of the text the many prophecies, amongst others that of an imminent social revolution in England, which my youthful ardour induced me to venture upon. The wonder is, not that a good many of them proved wrong, but that so many of them have proved right, and that the critical state of English trade, to be brought on by Continental and especially American competition, which I then foresaw—though in too short a period—has now actually come to pass. In this respect I can, and am bound to, bring the book up to date, by placing here an article which I published in the *London Commonweal* of March 1, 1885, under the heading: "England in 1845 and in 1885." It gives at the same time a short outline of the history of the English working-class during these forty years, and is as follows:

"Forty years ago England stood face to face with a crisis, solvable to all appearances by force only. The immense and rapid development of manufactures had outstripped the extension of foreign markets and the increase of demand. Every ten years the march of industry was violently interrupted by a general commercial crash, followed, after a long period of chronic depression, by a few short years of prosperity, and always ending in feverish over-production and consequent renewed collapse. The capitalist class clamoured for Free Trade in corn, and threatened to enforce it by sending the starving population of the towns back to the country districts whence they came, to invade them, as John Bright said, not as paupers begging for bread, but as an army quartered upon the enemy. The working masses of the towns demanded their share of political power—the People's Charter; they were supported by the majority of the small trading class, and the only difference between the two was whether the Charter should be carried by physical or by moral force. Then came the commercial crash of 1847 and the Irish famine, and with both the prospect of revolution.

"The French Revolution of 1848 saved the English middle-class. The Socialistic pronouncements of the victorious French workmen frightened the small middle-class of England and disorganised the narrower but more matter-of-fact movement of the English working-class. At the very moment when Chartism was bound to assert itself in its full strength, it collapsed internally before even it collapsed externally on the 10th of April, 1848. The action of the working-class was thrust into the background. The capitalist class triumphed along the whole line.

"The Reform Bill of 1831 had been the victory of the whole capitalist class over the landed aristocracy. The repeal of the Corn Laws was the victory of the manufacturing capitalist not only over the landed aristocracy, but over those sections of capitalists, too, whose interests were more or less bound up with the landed interest—bankers, stock-jobbers, fund-holders, etc. Free Trade meant the re-adjustment of the whole home and foreign, commercial and financial policy of England in accordance with the interests of the manufacturing capitalists—the class which now represented the nation. And they set about this task with a will. Every obstacle to industrial production was mercilessly removed. The tariff and the whole system of taxation were revolutionised. Everything was made subordinate to one end, but that end of the utmost importance to the manufacturing capitalist: the cheapening of all raw produce, and especially of the means of living of the working-class; the reduction of the cost of raw material, and the keeping down—if not as yet the *bringing down*—of wages. England was to become the 'workshop of the world'; all other countries were to become for England what Ireland already was—markets for her manufactured goods, supplying her in return with raw materials and food. England, the great manufacturing centre of an agricultural world, with an ever-increasing number of corn and cotton-growing Irelands revolving around her, the industrial sun. What a glorious prospect!

"The manufacturing capitalists set about the realisation of this their great object with that strong common sense and that contempt for traditional principles which has ever distinguished them from their more narrow-minded compeers on the Continent. Chartism was dying out. The revival of commercial prosperity, natural after the revulsion of 1847 had spent itself, was put down altogether to the credit of Free Trade. Both these circumstances had turned the English working-class, politically, into the tail of the 'great Liberal party,' the party led by the manufacturers. This advantage, once gained, had to be perpetuated. And the manufacturing capitalists, from the Chartist opposition, not to Free Trade, but to the transformation of Free Trade into the one vital national question, had learnt, and were learning more and more, that the middle-class can never obtain full social and political power over the nation except by the help of the working-class. Thus a gradual change came over the relations between both classes. The Factory Acts, once the bugbear of all manufacturers, were not only willingly submitted to, but their expansion into acts regulating almost all trades was tolerated. Trades' Unions, hitherto considered inventions of the devil himself, were now petted and patronised as perfectly legitimate institutions, and as useful means of spreading sound

economical doctrines amongst the workers. Even strikes, than which nothing had been more nefarious up to 1848, were now gradually found out to be occasionally very useful, especially when provoked by the masters themselves, at their own time. Of the legal enactments, placing the workman at a lower level or at a disadvantage with regard to the master, at least the most revolting were repealed. And, practically, that horrid 'People's Charter' actually became the political program of the very manufacturers who had opposed it to the last. 'The Abolition of the Property Qualification' and 'Vote by Ballot' are now the law of the land. The Reform Acts of 1867 and 1884 make a near approach to 'universal suffrage,' at least such as it now exists in Germany; the Redistribution Bill now before Parliament creates 'equal electoral districts'—on the whole not more unequal than those of Germany; 'payment of members,' and shorter, if not actually 'annual Parliaments,' are visibly looming in the distance—and yet there are people who say that Chartism is dead.

"The Revolution of 1848, not less than many of its predecessors, has had strange bedfellows and successors. The very people who put it down have become, as Karl Marx used to say, its testamentary executors. Louis Napoleon had to create an independent and united Italy, Bismarck had to revolutionise Germany and to restore Hungarian independence, and the English manufacturers had to enact the People's Charter.

"For England, the effects of this domination of the manufacturing capitalists were at first startling. Trade revived and extended to a degree unheard of even in this cradle of modern industry; the previous astounding creations of steam and machinery dwindled into nothing compared with the immense mass of productions of the twenty years from 1850 to 1870, with the overwhelming figures of exports and imports, of wealth accumulated in the hands of capitalists and of human working power concentrated in the large towns. The progress was indeed interrupted, as before, by a crisis every ten years, in 1857 as well as in 1866; but these revulsions were now considered as natural, inevitable events, which must be fatalistically submitted to, and which always set themselves right in the end.

"And the condition of the working-class during this period? There was temporary improvement even for the great mass. But this improvement always was reduced to the old level by the influx of the great body of the unemployed reserve, by the constant superseding of hands by new machinery, by the immigration of the agricultural population, now, too, more and more superseded by machines.



"A permanent improvement can be recognised for two 'protected' sections only of the working-class. Firstly, the factory hands. The fixing by Act of Parliament of their working-day within relatively rational limits has restored their physical constitution and endowed them with a moral superiority, enhanced by their local concentration. They are undoubtedly better off than before 1848. The best proof is that, out of ten strikes they make, nine are provoked by the manufacturers in their own interests, as the only means of securing a reduced production. You can never get the masters to agree to work 'short time,' let manufactured goods be ever so unsaleable; but get the workpeople to strike, and the masters shut their factories to a man.

"Secondly, the great Trades' Unions. They are the organisations of those trades in which the labour of *grown-up men* predominates, or is alone applicable. Here the competition neither of women and children nor of machinery has so far weakened their organised strength. The engineers, the carpenters and joiners, the bricklayers, are each of them a power to that extent that, as in the case of the bricklayers and bricklayers' labourers, they can even successfully resist the introduction of machinery. That their condition has remarkably improved since 1848 there can be no doubt, and the best proof of this is in the fact that for more than fifteen years not only have their employers been with them, but they with their employers, upon exceedingly good terms. They form an aristocracy among the working-class; they have succeeded in enforcing for themselves a relatively comfortable position, and they accept it as final. They are the model working-men of Messrs. Leone Levi & Giffen, and they are very nice people indeed nowadays to deal with, for any sensible capitalist in particular and for the whole capitalist class in general.

"But as to the great mass of working-people, the state of misery and insecurity in which they live now is as low as ever, if not lower. The East End of London is an ever-spreading pool of stagnant misery and desolation, of starvation when out of work, and degradation, physical and moral, when in work. And so in all other large towns—abstraction made of the privileged minority of the workers; and so in the smaller towns and in the agricultural districts. The law which reduces the *value* of labour power to the value of the necessary means of subsistence, and the other law which reduces its *average price*, as a rule, to the minimum of those means of subsistence, these laws act upon them with the irresistible force of an automatic engine which crushes them between its wheels.

"This, then, was the position created by the Free Trade policy of 1847, and by twenty years of the rule of the manufacturing capital-

ists. But then a change came. The crash of 1866 was, indeed, followed by a slight and short revival about 1873; but that did not last. We did not, indeed, pass through the full crisis at the time it was due, in 1877 or 1878; but we have had, ever since 1876, a chronic state of stagnation in all dominant branches of industry. Neither will the full crash come; nor will the period of longed-for prosperity to which we used to be entitled before and after it. A dull depression, a chronic glut of all markets for all trades, that is what we have been living in for nearly ten years. How is this?

"The Free Trade theory was based upon one assumption: that England was to be the one great manufacturing centre of an agricultural world. And the actual fact is that this assumption has turned out to be a pure delusion. The conditions of modern industry, steam-power and machinery, can be established wherever there is fuel, especially coals. And other countries besides England—France, Belgium, Germany, America, even Russia—have coals. And the people over there did not see the advantage of being turned into Irish pauper farmers merely for the greater wealth and glory of English capitalists. They set resolutely about manufacturing, not only for themselves, but for the rest of the world; and the consequence is that the manufacturing monopoly enjoyed by England for nearly a century is irretrievably broken up.

"But the manufacturing monopoly of England is the pivot of the present social system of England. Even while that monopoly lasted, the markets could not keep pace with the increasing productivity of English manufacturers; the decennial crises were the consequence. And new markets are getting scarcer every day, so much so that even the Negroes of the Congo are now to be forced into the civilisation attendant upon Manchester calicos, Staffordshire pottery, and Birmingham hardware. How will it be when Continental, and especially American, goods flow in in ever-increasing quantities—when the predominating share, still held by British manufacturers, will become reduced from year to year? Answer, Free Trade, thou universal panacea!

"I am not the first to point this out. Already in 1883, at the Southport meeting of the British Association, Mr. Inglis Palgrave, the President of the Economic section, stated plainly that 'the days of great trade profits in England were over, and there was a pause in the progress of several great branches of industrial labour. *The country might almost be said to be entering the non-progressive state.*'

"But what is to be the consequence? Capitalist production cannot stop. It must go on increasing and expanding, or it must die. Even now the mere reduction of England's lion's share in the supply of the world's markets means stagnation, distress, excess of

capital here, excess of unemployed workpeople there. What will it be when the increase of yearly production is brought to a complete stop?

"Here is the vulnerable place, the heel of Achilles, for capitalistic production. Its very basis is the necessity of constant expansion, and this constant expansion now becomes impossible. It ends in a deadlock. Every year England is brought nearer face to face with the question: either the country must go to pieces, or capitalist production must. Which is it to be?

"And the working-class? If even under the unparalleled commercial and industrial expansion, from 1848 to 1866, they have had to undergo such misery; if even then the great bulk of them experienced at best but a temporary improvement of their condition, while only a small, privileged, 'protected' minority was permanently benefited, what will it be when this dazzling period is brought finally to a close; when the present dreary stagnation shall not only become intensified, but this, its intensified condition, shall become the permanent and normal state of English trade?

"The truth is this: during the period of England's industrial monopoly the English working-class have, to a certain extent, shared in the benefits of the monopoly. These benefits were very unequally parcelled out amongst them; the privileged minority pocketed most, but even the great mass had, at least, a temporary share now and then. And that is the reason why, since the dying-out of Owenism, there has been no Socialism in England. With the breakdown of that monopoly, the English working-class will lose that privileged position; it will find itself generally—the privileged and leading minority not excepted—on a level with its fellow workers abroad. And that is the reason why there will be Socialism again in England."

To this statement of the case, as that case appeared to me in 1885, I have but little to add. Needless to say that to-day there is indeed "Socialism again in England," and plenty of it—Socialism of all shades: Socialism conscious and unconscious, Socialism prosaic and poetic, Socialism of the working-class and of the middle-class, for, verily, that abomination of abominations, Socialism, has not only become respectable, but has actually donned evening dress and lounges lazily on drawing-room *causeuses*. That shows the incurable fickleness of that terrible despot of "society," middle-class public opinion, and once more justifies the contempt in which we Socialists of a past generation always held that public opinion. At the same time we have no reason to grumble at the symptom itself.

What I consider far more important than this momentary fashion among bourgeois circles of affecting a mild dilution of Socialism,

and even more than the actual progress Socialism has made in England generally, that is the revival of the East End of London. That immense haunt of misery is no longer the stagnant pool it was six years ago. It has shaken off its torpid despair, has returned to life, and has become the home of what is called the "New Unionism," that is to say, of the organisation of the great mass of "unskilled" workers. This organisation may to a great extent adopt the form of the old Unions of "skilled" workers but it is essentially different in character. The old Unions preserve the traditions of the time when they were founded, and look upon the wages system as a once-for-all established, final fact, which they at best can modify in the interest of their members. The new Unions were founded at a time when the faith in the eternity of the wages system was severely shaken; their founders and promoters were Socialists either consciously or by feeling; the masses, whose adhesion gave them strength, were rough, neglected, looked down upon by the working-class aristocracy; but they had this immense advantage, that *their minds were virgin soil*, entirely free from the inherited "respectable" bourgeois prejudices which hampered the brains of the better situated "old" Unionists. And thus we see now these new Unions taking the lead of the working-class movement generally, and more and more taking in tow the rich and proud "old" Unions.

Undoubtedly, the East Enders have committed colossal blunders; so have their predecessors, and so do the doctrinaire Socialists who pooh-pooh them. A large class, like a great nation, never learns better or quicker than by undergoing the consequences of its own mistakes. And for all the faults committed in past, present and future, the revival of the East End of London remains one of the greatest and most fruitful facts of this *fin de siècle*, and glad and proud I am to have lived to see it.

F. Engels

January 11th, 1892<sup>1</sup>

Written by Engels for the English Edition, published in London in 1892, of his book, *The Condition of the Working-Class in England in 1844*

Printed according to the text of the 1892 edition  
Written in English

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<sup>1</sup> In his Preface to the second German edition of *The Condition of the Working-Class in England in 1844* Engels quoted a passage from the above English Preface and then added the following in conclusion:

"Since I wrote the above, six months ago, the English working-class movement has again made a big step forward. The parliamentary elections which took place the other day have given formal notice to both official parties, the

Conservatives and the Liberals, that both of them would thereafter have to reckon with a third party, the workers' party. This workers' party is only just being formed; its elements are still occupied with casting off traditional prejudices of every sort—bourgeois, old trade-unionist and even doctrinaire-Socialist—so that they may finally be able to get together on a basis common to all of them. And yet the instinct to unite which they followed was already so great that it produced election results hitherto unheard-of in England. In London two workers stood for election, and openly as Socialists at that; the Liberals did not dare to put up their own men against them and the two Socialists won by overwhelming and unexpected majorities. In Middlesbrough a workers' candidate contested a seat with a Liberal and a Conservative and was elected in spite of the two; on the other hand, the new workers' candidates who had made compacts with the Liberals failed hopelessly of election, with the exception of a single one. Among the former so-called workers' representatives, that is, those people who are forgiven their being members of the working class because they themselves would like to drown their quality of being workers in the ocean of their liberalism, Henry Broadhurst, the most important representative of the old unionism, was completely snowed under because he came out against the eight-hour day. In two Glasgow, one Salford and several other constituencies, independent workers' candidates ran against candidates of both the old parties. They were beaten, but so were the Liberal candidates. In short, in a number of big city and industrial constituencies the workers have definitely severed all ties with the two old parties and thus achieved direct or indirect successes beyond anything witnessed in any previous election. And boundless is the joy thereof among the working people. For the first time they have seen and felt what they can achieve by using their suffrage in the interest of their class. The spell which the superstitious belief in the "great Liberal Party" cast over the English workers for almost 40 years is broken. They have seen by dint of striking examples that they, the workers, are the decisive power in England if they only want to and know what they want; and the elections of 1892 marked the beginning of such knowing and wanting. The Continental workers' movement will take care of the rest. By their further successes the Germans and the French, who are already so numerous represented in their Parliaments and local councils, will keep the spirit of emulation of the English going at a quite adequate pace. And if in the not very distant future it appears that this new Parliament cannot get anywhere with Mr. Gladstone, and Mr. Gladstone cannot get anywhere with this Parliament, the English workers' party will surely be sufficiently constituted to put an early end to the seesaw of the two old parties, who have been succeeding each other in the government and by this very means perpetuating the rule of the bourgeoisie."—*Ed.*

*Frederick Engels*

## THE PEASANT QUESTION IN FRANCE AND GERMANY

The bourgeois and reactionary parties greatly wonder why everywhere among Socialists the peasant question has now suddenly been placed upon the order of the day. What they should be wondering at, by rights, is that this has not been done long ago. From Ireland to Sicily, from Andalusia to Russia and Bulgaria, the peasant is a very essential factor of the population, production and political power. Only two regions of Western Europe form an exception. In Great Britain proper big landed estates and large-scale agriculture have totally displaced the self-supporting peasant; in Prussia east of the Elbe the same process has been going on for centuries; here too the peasant is being increasingly "turned out" or at least economically and politically forced into the background.

The peasant has so far largely manifested himself as a factor of political power only by his apathy, which has its roots in the isolation of rustic life. This apathy on the part of the great mass of the population is the strongest pillar not only of the parliamentary corruption in Paris and Rome but also of Russian despotism. Yet it is by no means insuperable. Since the rise of the working-class movement in Western Europe, particularly in those parts where small peasant holdings predominate, it has not been particularly difficult for the bourgeoisie to render the socialist workers suspicious and odious in the minds of the peasants as *partageux*, as people who want to "divide up," as lazy, greedy city dwellers who have an eye on the property of the peasants. The hazy socialistic aspirations of the Revolution of February 1848 were rapidly disposed of by the reactionary ballots of the French peasantry; the peasant, who wanted peace of mind, dug up from his treasured memories the legend of Napoleon, the emperor of the peasants, and created the Second Empire. We all know what this one feat of the peasants cost the people of France; it is still suffering from its aftermath.

But much has changed since then. The development of the capitalist form of production has cut the lifestrings of small production in agriculture; small production is irretrievably going to rack and ruin. Competitors in North and South America and in India, too, have swamped the European market with their cheap grain, so cheap that no domestic producer can compete with it. The big landlords and small peasants alike see ruin staring them in the face. And since they are both owners of land and country folk, the big landlords assume the role of champions of the interests of the small peasants, and the small peasants by and large accept him as such.

Meanwhile a powerful socialist workers' party has sprung up and developed in the West. The obscure presentiments and feelings dating back to the February Revolution have become clarified and acquired the broader and deeper scope of a program that meets all scientific requirements and contains definite tangible demands; and a steadily growing number of Socialist deputies fight for these demands in the German, French and Belgian parliaments. The conquest of political power by the Socialist Party has become a matter of the not too distant future. But in order to conquer political power this party must first go from the towns to the country, must become a power in the countryside. This party, which has an advantage over all others in that it possesses a clear insight into the interconnections between economic causes and political effects and long ago descried the wolf in the sheep's clothing of the big landlord, that importunate friend of the peasant—may this party calmly leave the doomed peasant in the hands of his false protectors until he has been transformed from a passive into an active opponent of the industrial workers? This brings us right into the thick of the peasant question.

## I

The rural population to which we can address ourselves consists of quite different parts, which vary greatly with the various regions.

In the West of Germany, as in France and Belgium, there prevails the small-scale cultivation of small-holding peasants, the majority of whom own and the minority of whom rent their parcels of land.

In the Northwest—in Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein—we have a preponderance of big and middle peasants who cannot do without male and female farm servants and even day labourers. The same is true of part of Bavaria.

In Prussia east of the Elbe and in Mecklenburg we have the region of big landed estates and large-scale cultivation with hinds,

cotters and day labourers, and in between small and middle peasants in relatively unimportant and steadily decreasing proportion.

In central Germany all these forms of production and ownership are found mixed in various proportions, depending upon the locality, without the decided prevalence of any particular form over a large area.

Besides there are localities varying in extent where the arable land owned or rented is insufficient to provide for the subsistence of the family, but can serve only as the basis for operating a domestic industry and enabling the latter to pay the otherwise incomprehensibly low wages that ensure the steady sale of its products despite all foreign competition.

Which of these subdivisions of the rural population can be won over by the Social-Democratic Party? We, of course, investigate this question only in broad outline; we single out only clear-cut forms. We lack space to give consideration to intermediate stages and mixed rural populations.

Let us begin with the small peasant. Not only is he, of all peasants, the most important for Western Europe in general, but he is also the critical case that decides the entire question. Once we have clarified in our minds our attitude to the small peasant we have all the data needed to determine our stand relative to the other constituent parts of the rural population.

By small peasant we mean here the owner or tenant—particularly the former—of a patch of land no bigger, as a rule, than he and his family can till, and no smaller than can sustain the family. This small peasant, just like the small handicraftsman, is therefore a toiler who differs from the modern proletarian in that he still possesses his instruments of labour; hence a survival of a past mode of production. There is a threefold difference between him and his ancestor, the serf, bondman or, quite exceptionally, the free peasant liable to rent and feudal services. First, in that the French Revolution freed him from the feudal services and dues that he owed to the landlord and in the majority of cases, at least on the left bank of the Rhine, assigned his peasant farm to him as his own free property. Secondly, in that he lost the protection of and the right to participate in the self-administering mark community, and hence his share in the emoluments of the former common mark. The common mark was whisked away partly by the erstwhile feudal lord and partly by enlightened bureaucratic legislation patterned after Roman law. This deprives the small peasant of modern times of the possibility of feeding his draft animals without buying fodder. Economically, however, the loss of the emoluments derived from the mark by far outweighs the benefits accruing from the abolition



of feudal services. The number of peasants unable to keep draft animals of their own is steadily increasing. Thirdly, the peasant of today has lost half of his former productive activity. Formerly he and his family produced, from raw material he had made himself, the greater part of the industrial products that he needed; the rest of what he required was supplied by village neighbours who plied a trade in addition to farming and were paid mostly in articles of exchange or in reciprocal services. The family, and still more the village, was self-sufficient, produced almost everything it needed. It was natural economy almost unalloyed; almost no money was necessary. Capitalist production put an end to this by its money economy and large-scale industry. But if the mark emoluments represented one of the basic conditions of his existence, his industrial side line was another. And thus the peasant sinks ever lower. Taxes, crop failures, partitions among heirs and litigation drive one peasant after another into the arms of the usurer; the indebtedness becomes more and more general and steadily increases in amount in each case—in brief, our small peasant, like every other survival of a past mode of production, is hopelessly doomed. He is a future proletarian.

As such he ought to lend a ready ear to socialist propaganda. But he is prevented from doing so for the time being by his deep-rooted sense of property. The more difficult it is for him to defend his endangered patch of land the more desperately he clings to it, the more he regards the Social-Democrats, who speak of transferring landed property to the whole of society, as just as dangerous a foe as the usurer and lawyer. How is the Social-Democracy to overcome this prejudice? What can it offer to the doomed small peasant without becoming untrue to itself?

Here we find a practical point of support in the agrarian program of the French Socialists of the Marxian trend, a program which is the more noteworthy as it comes from the classical land of small peasant economy.

The Marseilles Congress of 1892 adopted the first agrarian program of the Party. It demands for propertyless rural *workers* (that is to say, day labourers and hinds): minimum wages fixed by trade unions and community councils; rural trade courts consisting half of workers; prohibition of the sale of common land; and the leasing of public domain land to communities which are to rent all this land, whether owned by them or rented, to associations of propertyless families of farm labourers for common cultivation, on condition that the employment of wage workers be prohibited and that the communities exercise control; old-age and invalid pensions, to be defrayed by means of a special tax on big landed estates.

On behalf of the *small peasants*, with special consideration for tenant farmers, the program demands: the acquisition of farm machinery by the community to be leased at cost price to the peasants; the formation of peasant cooperatives for the purchase of manure, drainpipes, seed, etc., and for the sale of the produce; abolition of the real estate transfer tax if the value involved does not exceed 5,000 francs; arbitration commissions on the Irish pattern to reduce exorbitant rentals and compensate quitting tenant farmers and share croppers (*métayers*) for appreciation of the land due to them; repeal of Article 2,102 of the Civil Code which allows a landlord to distrain on the crop, and the abolition of the right of creditors to levy on growing crops; exemption from levy and distraint of a definite amount of farm implements and of the crop, seed, manure, draft animals, in short, whatever is indispensable to the peasant for carrying on his business; revision of the general cadaster, which has long been out of date, and until such time a local revision in each community; lastly, free instruction for adults in farming, and agricultural test stations.

As we see, the demands made in the interests of the peasants—those made in the interests of the workers do not concern us here for the time being—are not very far-reaching. Part of them have already been realized elsewhere. The tenants' arbitration courts follow the Irish prototype by express mention. Peasant cooperatives already exist in the Rhine provinces. The revision of the cadastres has been a constant pious wish of all liberals and even bureaucrats throughout Western Europe. The other points, too, could be carried into effect without any substantial impairment of the existing capitalist order. So much simply in characterization of the program. No reproach is intended; quite the contrary.

The Party did such a good business with this program among the peasants in the most diverse parts of France that—since appetite comes with eating—one felt constrained to suit it still more to their taste. It was felt, however, that this would be treading on dangerous ground. How was the peasant to be helped, not the peasant as a future proletarian but as a present proprietor, without violating the basic principles of the general socialist program? In order to meet this objection the new practical proposals were prefaced by a theoretical preamble, which seeks to prove that it is in keeping with the principles of Socialism to protect small-peasant property from destruction by the capitalist mode of production although one is perfectly aware that this destruction is inevitable. Let us now examine more closely this preamble as well as the demands themselves, which were adopted by the Nantes Congress in September of this year.

The preamble begins as follows:

"Whereas according to the terms of the general program of the Party producers can be free only in so far as they are in possession of the means of production;

"Whereas in the sphere of industry these means of production have already reached such a degree of capitalist centralization that they can be restored to the producers only in collective or social form, but in the sphere of agriculture—at least in present-day France—this is by no means the case, the means of production, namely, the land, being in very many localities still in the hands of the producers themselves as their individual possession;

"Whereas even if this state of affairs characterized by small-holding ownership is irretrievably doomed (*est fatalement appelé à disparaître*), still it is not for Socialism to hasten this doom, as its task does not consist in separating property from labour but, on the contrary, in uniting both of these factors of all production by placing them in the same hands, factors the separation of which entails the servitude and poverty of the workers reduced to proletarians;

"Whereas, on the one hand, it is the duty of Socialism to put the agricultural proletarians again in possession—collective or social in form—of the great domains after expropriating their present idle owners, it is, on the other hand, no less its imperative duty to maintain the peasants themselves tilling their patches of land in possession of the same as against the fisk, the usurer and the encroachments of the newly arisen big landlords;

"Whereas it is expedient to extend this protection also to the producers who as tenants or share croppers (*métayers*) cultivate the land owned by others and who, if they exploit day labourers, are to a certain extent compelled to do so because of the exploitation to which they themselves are subjected—

"Therefore the Workers' Party—which unlike the anarchists does not count on an increase and spread of poverty for the transformation of the social order but expects labour and society in general to be emancipated only by the organization and concerted efforts of the workers of both country and town, by their taking possession of the government and legislation—has adopted the following agrarian program in order thereby to bring together all the elements of rural production, all occupations which by virtue of various rights and titles utilize the national soil, to wage an identical struggle against the common foe: land-owning feudalism."

Now for a closer examination of these "whereases."

To begin with, the statement in the French program that freedom of the producers presupposes the possession of the means of production must be supplemented by those immediately following: that the possession of the means of production is possible only in two

forms: either as individual possession, which form never and nowhere existed for the producers in general, and is daily being made more impossible by industrial progress; or as common possession, a form the material and intellectual preconditions of which have been established by the development of capitalist society itself; that therefore taking *collective* possession of the means of production must be fought for by all means at the disposal of the proletariat.

The common possession of the means of production is thus set forth here as the sole principal goal to be striven for. Not only in industry, where the ground has already been prepared, but in general, hence also in agriculture. According to the program individual possession never and nowhere obtained generally for all producers; for that very reason and because industrial progress removes it anyhow, Socialism is not interested in maintaining but rather in removing it; because where it exists and in so far as it exists it makes common possession impossible. Once we cite the program in support of our contention we must cite the entire program, which considerably modifies the proposition quoted in Nantes; for it makes the general historical truth expressed in it dependent upon the conditions under which alone it can remain a truth today in Western Europe and North America.

Possession of the means of production by the individual producers nowadays no longer grants these producers real freedom. Handicraft has already been ruined in the cities; in metropolises like London it has already disappeared entirely, having been superseded by large-scale industry, the sweatshop system and miserable bunglers who thrive on bankruptcy. The self-supporting small peasant is neither in the safe possession of his tiny patch of land nor is he free. He as well as his house, his farmstead and his few fields belong to the usurer; his livelihood is more uncertain than that of the proletarian, who at least does have tranquil days now and then, which is never the case with the eternally tortured debt slave. Strike out Article 2,102 of the Civil Code, provide by law that a definite amount of a peasant's farm implements, cattle, etc., shall be exempt from levy and distraint; yet you cannot ensure him against an emergency in which he is compelled to sell his cattle "voluntarily," in which he must sign himself away body and soul to the usurer and be glad to get a reprieve. Your attempt to protect the small peasant in his property does not protect his liberty but only the particular form of his servitude; it prolongs a situation in which he can neither live nor die. It is, therefore, entirely out of place here to cite the first paragraph of your program as authority for your contention.

The preamble states that in present-day France the means of production, that is, the land, is in very many localities still in the

hands of individual producers as their individual possession; that, however, it is not the task of Socialism to separate property from labour, but, on the contrary, to unite these two factors of all production by placing them in the same hands. As has already been pointed out, the latter in this general form is by no means the task of Socialism. The latter's task is rather only to transfer the means of production to the producers as their *common possession*. As soon as we lose sight of this the above statement becomes directly misleading in that it implies that it is the mission of Socialism to convert the present sham property of the small peasant in his fields into real property, that is to say, to convert the small tenant into an owner and the indebted owner into a debtless owner. Undoubtedly Socialism is interested to see that the false semblance of peasant property should disappear, but not in this manner.

At any rate we have now got so far that the preamble can straightforwardly declare it to be the duty of Socialism, indeed, its imperative duty, "to maintain the peasants themselves tilling their patches of land in possession of the same as against the fisk, the usurer and the encroachments of the newly arisen big landlords." The preamble thus imposes upon Socialism the imperative duty to carry out something which it had declared to be impossible in the preceding paragraph. It charges it to "maintain" the small-holding ownership of the peasants although it itself states that this form of ownership is "irretrievably doomed." What are the fisk, the usurer and the newly arisen big landlords if not the instruments by means of which capitalist production brings about this inevitable doom? What means "Socialism" is to employ to protect the peasant against this trinity we shall see below.

But not only the small peasant is to be protected in his property. It is likewise "expedient to extend this protection also to the producers who as tenants or share croppers (*métayers*) cultivate land owned by others and who, if they exploit day labourers, are to a certain extent compelled to do so because of the exploitation to which they themselves are subjected." Here we are entering upon ground that is passing strange. Socialism is particularly opposed to the exploitation of wage labour. And here it is declared to be the imperative duty of Socialism to protect the French tenants when they "exploit day labourers," as the text literally states! And that because they are compelled to do so to a certain extent "by the exploitation to which they themselves are subjected"!

How easy and pleasant it is to keep on coasting once you are on the toboggan slide! When now the big and middle peasants of Germany come to ask the French Socialists to intercede with the German Party Executive to get the German Social-Democratic Party

to protect them in the exploitation of their male and female farm servants, citing in support of their contention the "exploitation to which they themselves are subjected" by usurers, tax collectors, grain speculators and cattle dealers, what will they answer? What guarantee have they that our agrarian big landlords will not send them Count Kanitz (as he also submitted a proposal like theirs providing for a state monopoly of grain importation) and likewise ask for socialist protection of their exploitation of the rural workers, citing in support "the exploitation to which they themselves are subjected" by stockjobbers, money lenders and grain speculators?

Let us say here at the outset that the intentions of our French friends are not as bad as one would suppose. The above sentence, we are told, is intended to cover only a quite special case, namely the following: In Northern France, just as in our sugar-beet districts, land is leased to the peasants subject to the obligation to cultivate beets, on conditions which are extremely onerous. They must deliver the beets to a stated factory at a price fixed by it, must buy definite seed, use a fixed quantity of prescribed fertilizer and on delivery are badly cheated into the bargain. We know all about this in Germany, as well. But if this sort of peasant is to be taken under one's wing this must be said openly and expressly. As the sentence reads now, in its unlimited general form, it is a direct violation not only of the French program but also of the fundamental principle of Socialism in general, and its authors will have no cause for complaint if this careless piece of editing is used against them in various quarters contrary to their intention.

Also capable of such misconstruction are the concluding words of the preamble according to which it is the task of the Socialist Workers' Party "to bring together all the elements of rural production, all occupations which by virtue of various rights and titles utilize the national soil, to wage an identical struggle against the common foe: land-owning feudalism." I flatly deny that the Socialist workers' party of any country is charged with the task of taking into its fold, in addition to the rural proletarians and the small peasants, also the middle and big peasants and perhaps even the tenants of big estates, the capitalist cattle breeders and the other capitalist exploiters of the national soil. To all of them land-owning feudalism may appear to be a common foe. On certain questions we may make common cause with them and be able to fight side by side with them for definite aims. We can use in our Party individuals from every class of society, but have no use whatever for any groups representing capitalist, middle-bourgeois or middle-peasant interests. Here too what they mean is not as bad as it looks. The authors evidently never even gave all this a thought. But unfortunately

they allowed themselves to be carried away by their zeal for generalization and they must not be surprised if they are taken at their word.

After the preamble come the newly adopted addenda to the program itself. They betray the same cursory editing as the preamble.

The article providing that the communities must procure farming machinery and lease it at cost to the peasants is modified so as to provide that the communities are, in the first place, to receive state subsidies for this purpose and, secondly, that the machinery is to be placed at the disposal of the small peasants gratis. This further concession will not be of much avail to the small peasants, whose fields and mode of production permit of but little use of machinery.

Furthermore, substitution of a single progressive tax on all incomes upward of 3,000 francs for all existing direct and indirect taxes. A similar demand has been included for many years in almost every social-democratic program. But that this demand is raised in the special interests of the small peasants is something new and shows only how little its real scope has been calculated. Take Great Britain. There the state budget amounts to 90 million pounds sterling, of which  $13\frac{1}{2}$  to 14 million are accounted for by the income tax. The smaller part of the remaining 76 million is contributed by taxing business (post and telegraph charges, stamp tax), but by far the greater part of it by imposts on articles of mass consumption, by the constantly repeated clipping of small, imperceptible amounts totalling many millions from the incomes of all members of the population, but particularly of its poorer sections. In present-day society it is scarcely possible to defray state expenditures in any other way. Suppose the whole 90 million are saddled in Great Britain on the incomes of 120 pounds sterling = 3,000 francs and in excess thereof by the imposition of a progressive direct tax. The average annual accumulation, the annual increase of the aggregate national wealth, amounted in 1865 to 1875, according to Giffen, to 240 million pounds sterling. Let us assume it now equals 300 million annually; a tax of 90 million would consume almost one-third of the aggregate accumulation. In other words, no government except a socialist one can undertake any such thing. When the Socialists are at the helm there will be things for them to carry into execution alongside of which that tax reform will figure as a mere, and quite insignificant, settlement for the moment while altogether different prospects open up before the small peasants.

One seems to realize that the peasants will have to wait rather long for this tax reform so that "in the meantime" (*en attendant*) the following prospect is held out to them: "abolition of taxes on

land for all peasants living by their own labour, and reduction of these taxes on all mortgaged plots." The latter half of this demand can refer only to peasant farms *too big* to be operated by the family itself; hence it is again a provision in favour of peasants who "exploit day labourers."

Again: "hunting and fishing rights without restrictions other than such as may be necessary for the conservation of game and fish and the protection of growing crops." This sounds very popular but the concluding part of the sentence wipes out the introductory part. How many rabbits, partridges, pikes and carps are there even today per peasant family in all the rural localities? Would you say more than would warrant giving each peasant just *one* day a year for free hunting and fishing?

"Lowering of the legal and conventional rate of interest"—hence renewed laws against usury, a renewed attempt to introduce a police measure that has always failed everywhere for the last two thousand years. If a small peasant finds himself in a position where recourse to a usurer is the lesser evil to him, the usurer will always find ways and means of sucking him dry without falling foul of the usury laws. This measure could serve at most to soothe the small peasant but he will derive no advantage from it; on the contrary, it makes it more difficult for him to obtain credit precisely when he needs it most.

"Medical service free of charge and medicines at cost price"—this at any rate is not a measure for the special protection of the peasants. The German program goes further and demands that medicine too should be free of charge.

"Compensation for families of reservists called up for military duty for the duration of their service"—this already exists, though most inadequately, in Germany and Austria and is likewise no special peasant demand.

"Lowering of the transport charges for fertilizer and farm machinery and products"—is on the whole in effect in Germany, and mainly in the interests—of the big landlords.

"Immediate preparatory work for the elaboration of a plan of public works for the amelioration of the soil and the development of agricultural production"—leaves everything in the realm of uncertainty and beautiful promises and is also above all in the interest of the big landed estates.

In brief, after the tremendous theoretical effort exhibited in the preamble the practical proposals of the new agrarian program are even more unrevealing as to the way in which the French Workers' Party expects to be able to maintain the small peasants in possession of their small holdings, which, on its own testimony, are irretrievably doomed,



## II

In one point our French comrades are absolutely right: No lasting revolutionary transformation is possible in France *against* the will of the small peasant. Only it seems to me they have not got the right leverage if they mean to bring the peasant under their influence.

They are bent, it seems, to win over the small peasant forthwith possibly even for the next general elections. This they can hope to achieve only by making very risky general assurances in defence of which they are compelled to set forth even much more risky theoretical considerations. Then, upon closer examination, it appears that the general assurances are self-contradictory (promise to maintain a state of affairs which, as one declares oneself, is irretrievably doomed) and that the various measures are either wholly without effect (usury laws), or are general workers' demands or demands which also benefit the big landlords or finally are such as are of no great importance by any means in promoting the interests of the small peasants. In consequence, the directly practical part of the program of itself corrects the erroneous initial part and reduces the apparently formidable grandiloquence of the preamble to actually innocent proportions.

Let us say it outright: in view of the prejudices arising out of their entire economic position, their upbringing and their isolated mode of life, prejudices nurtured by the bourgeois press and the big landlords, we can win the mass of the small peasants forthwith only if we make them a promise which we ourselves know we shall not be able to keep. That is, we must promise them not only to protect their property in any event against all economic forces sweeping upon them but also to relieve it of the burdens which already now oppress it: to transform the tenant into a free owner and to pay the debts of the owner succumbing to the weight of his mortgage. If we could do this we should again arrive at the point from which the present situation would necessarily develop anew. We shall not have emancipated the peasant but only given him a reprieve.

But it is not in our interests to win the peasant overnight only to lose him again on the morrow if we cannot keep our promise. We have no more use for the peasant as a Party member if he expects us to perpetuate his property in his small holding than for the small handicraftsmen who would fain be perpetuated as a master. These people belong to the anti-Semites. Let them go to them and let them promise to salvage their small enterprises. Once they learn there what these glittering phrases really amount to and what melodies are fid-

dled down from the anti-Semitic heavens they will realize in ever-increasing measure that we who promise less and look for salvation in entirely different quarters are after all more reliable people. If the French had the strident anti-Semitic demagoguery we have they would hardly have committed the Nantes mistake.

What, then, is our attitude towards the small peasantry? How shall we have to deal with it on the day of our accession to power?

To begin with, the French program is absolutely correct in stating: that we foresee the inevitable doom of the small peasant but that it is not our mission to hasten it by any interference on our part.

Secondly, it is just as evident that when we are in possession of state power we shall not even think of forcibly expropriating the small peasants (regardless of whether with or without compensation), as we shall have to do in the case of the big landowners. Our task relative to the small peasant consists, in the first place, in effecting a transition of his private enterprise and private possession to cooperative ones, not forcibly but by dint of example and the proffer of social assistance for this purpose. And then of course we shall have ample means of showing to the small peasant prospective advantages that must be obvious to him even today.

Almost twenty years ago the Danish Socialists, who have only one real city in their country—Copenhagen—and therefore have to rely almost exclusively on peasant propaganda outside of it, were already drawing up such plans. The peasants of a village or parish—there are many big individual homesteads in Denmark—were to pool their land to form a single big farm in order to cultivate it for common account and distribute the yield in proportion to the land, money and labour contributed. In Denmark small landed property plays only a secondary role. But if we apply this idea to a region of small holdings we shall find that if these are pooled and the aggregate area cultivated on a large scale, part of the labour power employed hitherto is rendered superfluous. It is precisely this saving of labour that represents one of the main advantages of large-scale farming. Employment can be found for this labour power in two ways. Either additional land taken from big estates in the neighbourhood is placed at the disposal of the peasant cooperative or the peasants in question are provided with the means and the opportunity of engaging in industry as an accessory calling, primarily and as far as possible for their own use. In either case their economic position is improved and simultaneously the general social directing agency is assured the necessary influence to transform the peasant cooperative to a higher form, and to equalize the rights and duties



sion. We do this not only because we consider the small peasant who does his own work as virtually belonging to us, but also in the direct interest of the Party. The greater the number of peasants whom we can save from being actually hurled down into the proletariat, whom we can win to our side while they are still peasants, the more quickly and easily the social transformation will be accomplished. It will serve us nought to wait with this transformation until capitalist production has developed everywhere to its utmost consequences, until the last small handicraftsman and the last small peasant have fallen victim to capitalist large-scale production. The material sacrifice to be made for this purpose in the interest of the peasants and to be defrayed out of public funds can, from the point of view of capitalist economy, be viewed only as money thrown away, but it is nevertheless an excellent investment because it will effect a perhaps tenfold saving in the cost of the social reorganization in general. In this sense we can, therefore, afford to deal very liberally with the peasants. This is not the place to go into details, to make concrete proposals to that end; here we can deal only with general principles.

Accordingly we can do no greater disservice to the Party as well as to the small peasants than to make promises that even only create the impression that we intend to preserve the small holdings permanently. It would mean directly to block the way of the peasants to their emancipation and to degrade the Party to the level of rowdy anti-Semitism. On the contrary, it is the duty of our Party to make clear to the peasants again and again that their position is absolutely hopeless as long as capitalism holds sway, that it is absolutely impossible to preserve their small holdings for them as such, that capitalist large-scale production is absolutely sure to run over their impotent antiquated system of small production as a train runs over a pushcart. If we do this we shall act in conformity with the inevitable trend of economic development, and this development will not fail to bring our words home to the small peasants.

Incidentally, I cannot leave this subject without expressing my conviction that the authors of the Nantes program are also essentially of my opinion. Their insight is much too great for them not to know that areas now divided into small holdings are also bound to become common property. They themselves admit that small-holding ownership is destined to disappear. The report of the National Council drawn up by Lafargue and delivered at the Congress of Nantes likewise fully corroborates this view. It has been published in German in the Berlin *Sozialdemokrat* of October 18 of this year. The contradictory nature of the expressions used in the Nantes program itself betrays the fact that what the authors actually say is not what they

want to say. If they are not understood and their statements misused, as actually has already happened, that is of course their own fault. At any rate, they will have to elucidate their program and the next French congress revise it thoroughly.

We now come to the bigger peasants. Here as a result of the partition of decedents' estates as well as of indebtedness and forced sales of land we find a variegated pattern of intermediate stages, from smallholding peasant to big peasant proprietor, who has retained his old patrimony intact or even added to it. Where the middle peasant lives among small-holding peasants his interests and views will not differ greatly from theirs; he knows from his own experience how many of his kind have already sunk to the level of small peasants. But where middle and big peasants predominate and the operation of the farms requires, generally, the help of male and female servants it is quite a different matter. Of course a workers' party has to fight, in the first place, on behalf of the wage workers, that is, for the male and female servantry and the day labourers. It is unquestionably forbidden to make any promises to the peasants which include the continuance of the wage slavery of the workers. But as long as the big and middle peasants continue to exist as such they cannot manage without wage workers. If it would, therefore, be downright folly on our part to hold out prospects to the smallholding peasants of continuing permanently to be such, it would border on treason were we to promise the same to the big and middle peasants.

We have here again the parallel case of the handicraftsmen in the cities. True, they are more ruined than the peasants but there still are some who employ journeymen in addition to apprentices or for whom apprentices do the work of journeymen. Let those of these master craftsmen who want to perpetuate their existence as such cast in their lot with the anti-Semites until they have convinced themselves that they get no help in that quarter either. The rest, who have realized that their mode of production is inevitably doomed, are coming over to us and, moreover, are ready in future to share the lot that is in store for all other workers. The same applies to the big and middle peasants. It goes without saying that we are more interested in their male and female servants and day labourers than in them themselves. If these peasants want to be guaranteed the continued existence of their enterprises we are in no position whatever to assure them of that. They must then take their place among the anti-Semites, peasant leaguers and similar parties who derive pleasure from promising everything and keeping nothing. We are economically certain that the big and middle peasant must likewise inevitably succumb to the competition of capitalist produc-

tion and the cheap overseas corn, as is proved by the growing indebtedness and the everywhere evident decay of these peasants as well. We can do nothing against this decay except recommend here too the pooling of farms to form cooperative enterprises, in which the exploitation of wage labour will be eliminated more and more, and their gradual transformation into branches of the great national producers' cooperative with each branch enjoying equal rights and duties can be instituted. If these peasants realize the inevitability of the doom of their present mode of production and draw the necessary conclusions they will come to us and it will be incumbent upon us to facilitate to the best of our ability also their transition to the changed mode of production. Otherwise we shall have to abandon them to their fate and address ourselves to their wage workers, among whom we shall not fail to find sympathy. Most likely we shall be able to abstain here as well from resorting to forcible expropriation, and as for the rest to count on future economic developments making also these harder pates amenable to reason.

Only the big landed estates present a perfectly simple case. Here we are dealing with undisguised capitalist production and no scruples of any sort need restrain us. Here we are confronted by rural proletarians in masses and our task is clear. As soon as our Party is in possession of political power it has simply to expropriate the big landed proprietors just like the manufacturers in industry. Whether this expropriation is to be compensated for or not will to a great extent depend not upon us but the circumstances under which we obtain power, and particularly upon the attitude adopted by these gentry, the big landlords, themselves. We by no means consider compensation as impermissible in any event; Marx told me (and how many times!) that in his opinion we would get off cheapest if we could buy out the whole lot of them. But this does not concern us here. The big estates thus restored to the community are to be turned over by us to the rural workers who are already cultivating them and are to be organized into cooperatives. They are to be assigned to them for their use and benefit under the control of the community. Nothing can as yet be stated as to the terms of their tenure. At any rate the transformation of the capitalist enterprise into a social enterprise is here fully prepared for and can be carried into execution overnight, precisely as in Mr. Krupp's or Mr. von Stumm's factory. And the example of these agricultural cooperatives would convince also the last of the still resistant small-holding peasants, and surely also many big peasants, of the advantages of cooperative, large-scale production.

Thus we can open up prospects here before the rural proletarians as splendid as those facing the industrial workers, and it can be only

a question of time, and of only a very short time, before we win over to our side the rural workers of Prussia east of the Elbe. But once we have the East-Elbe rural workers a different wind will blow at once all over Germany. The actual semi-servitude of the East Elbe rural workers is the main basis of the domination of Prussian junkerdom and thus of Prussia's specific overlordship in Germany. It is the junkers east of the Elbe who have created and preserved the specifically Prussian character of the bureaucracy as well as of the body of army officers—the junkers, who are being reduced more and more to ruin by their indebtedness, impoverishment and parasitism at state and private cost and for that very reason cling the more desperately to the dominion which they exercise; the junkers, whose haughtiness, bigotry and arrogance have brought the German Reich of the Prussian nation within the country into such hatred—even when every allowance is made for the fact that at present this Reich is inevitable as the sole form in which national unity can now be attained—and abroad so little respect despite its brilliant victories. The power of these junkers is grounded on the fact that within the compact territory of the seven old Prussian provinces—that is, approximately one-third of the entire territory of the Reich—they have at their disposal the landed property, which here brings with it both social and political power. And not only the landed property but, through their beet-sugar refineries and liquor distilleries, also the most important industries of this area. Neither the big landlords of the rest of Germany nor the big industrialists are in a similarly favourable position. Neither of them have a compact kingdom at their disposal. Both are scattered over a wide stretch of territory and compete among themselves and with other social elements surrounding them for economic and political predominance. But the economic foundation of this domination of the Prussian junkers is steadily deteriorating. Here too indebtedness and impoverishment are spreading irresistibly despite all state assistance (and since Frederick II this item is included in every regular junker budget). Only the actual semi-serfdom sanctioned by law and custom, and the resulting possibility of the unlimited exploitation of the rural workers, still barely keeps the drowning junkers above water. Sow the seed of social-democracy among these workers, give them the courage and cohesion to insist upon their rights, and the glory of the junkers will be at an end. The great reactionary power, which to Germany represents the same barbarous, predatory element as Russian tsardom does to the whole of Europe, will collapse like a pricked bubble. The “picked regiments” of the Prussian army will become social-democratic, which will result in a shift in power that is pregnant with an entire revolution. But for this reason it is of vastly greater importance to win the rural

proletariat east of the Elbe than the small peasants of Western Germany or yet the middle peasants of Southern Germany. It is here, in East-Elbe Prussia, that the decisive battle of our cause will have to be fought and for this very reason both government and junkerdom will do their utmost to prevent our gaining access here. And should, as we are threatened, new violent measures be resorted to to impede the spread of our Party, their primary purpose will be to protect the East-Elbe rural proletariat from our propaganda. It's all the same to us. We shall win it nevertheless.

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## *Karl Marx and Frederick Engels*

### LETTERS

#### MARX TO P. V. ANNENKOV

Brussels, December 28, 1846

You would long ago have received my answer to your letter of November 1 but for the fact that my bookseller sent me Proudhon's book, *The Philosophy of Poverty*, only last week. I have gone through it in two days in order to be able to give you my opinion at once. As I have read the book very hurriedly, I cannot go into details but can only tell you the general impression it has made on me. If you wish I could go into details in a second letter.

I must frankly confess to you that I find the book on the whole bad, very bad. You yourself make fun in your letter of the "patch of German philosophy" which M. Proudhon parades in this formless and pretentious work, but you suppose that the economic argument has not been infected by the philosophic poison. Well, I am very far from imputing the faults in the economic argument to M. Proudhon's philosophy. M. Proudhon does not give us a false criticism of political economy because he is the possessor of an absurd philosophy, but he gives us an absurd philosophy because he fails to understand the social situation of today in its concatenation [engrènement], to use a word which, like much else, M. Proudhon has borrowed from Fourier.

Why does M. Proudhon talk about god, about universal reason, about the impersonal reason of humanity which never errs, which has always been equal to itself throughout all the ages and of which one need only have the right idea in order to be in the right? Why does he produce a superficial Hegelianism to give himself the appearance of a profound thinker?

He himself provides you with the clue to this enigma. M. Proudhon sees in history a definite series of social developments; he finds

progress realized in history; finally he finds that men, as individuals, did not know what they were doing and were mistaken about their own movement, that is to say, their social development seems at the first glance to be distinct, separate and independent of their individual development. He cannot explain these facts, and the hypothesis of the universal reason manifesting itself is made out of whole cloth. Nothing is easier than to invent mystical causes, that is to say, phrases which lack common sense.

But when M. Proudhon admits that he understands nothing about the historical development of humanity—he admits this by using such high-sounding words as: Universal Reason, God, etc.—is he not implicitly and necessarily admitting that he is incapable of understanding *economic development*?

What is society, whatever its form may be? The product of men's reciprocal action. Are men free to choose this or that form of society? By no means. Assume a particular state of development in the productive faculties of man and you will get a corresponding form of commerce and consumption. Assume particular degrees of development of production, commerce and consumption and you will have a corresponding form of social constitution, a corresponding organization of the family, of orders or of classes, in a word, a corresponding civil society. Assume a particular civil society and you will get a particular political system, which is only the official expression of civil society. M. Proudhon will never understand this because he thinks he is doing something great by appealing from the state to society—that is to say, from the official résumé of society to official society.

It is superfluous to add that men are not free arbiters of *their productive forces*—which are the basis of all their history—for every productive force is an acquired force, the product of former activity. The productive forces are, therefore, the result of practical human energy; but this energy is itself circumscribed by the conditions in which men find themselves, by the productive forces already acquired, by the social form which exists before they do, which they do not create, which is the product of the preceding generation. Because of the simple fact that every succeeding generation finds itself in possession of the productive forces acquired by the preceding generation, which serve it as the raw material for new production, a coherence arises in human history, there is formed a history of humanity which is all the more a history of humanity since the productive forces of man and, therefore, his social relations have become more developed. Hence, it necessarily follows: the social history of men is never anything but the history of their individual development, whether they are conscious of it or not. Their material rela-

tions form the basis of all their relations. These material relations are only the necessary forms in which their material and individual activity is realized.

M. Proudhon mixes up ideas and things. Men never relinquish what they have won, but this does not mean that they never relinquish the social form in which they have acquired certain productive forces. On the contrary, in order that they may not be deprived of the result attained, and forfeit the fruits of civilization, they are obliged, from the moment when the form of their commerce no longer corresponds to the productive forces acquired, to change all their traditional social forms. I am using the word "commerce" here in its widest sense, as we use *Verkehr* in German. For example: privilege, the institution of guilds and corporations, the regulatory regime of the Middle Ages, were social relations that alone corresponded to the acquired productive forces and to the social condition which had previously existed and from which these institutions had arisen. Under the protection of the regime of corporations and regulations, capital was accumulated, overseas trade was developed, colonies were founded. But the fruits of this men would have forfeited had they sought to retain the forms under whose shelter these fruits had ripened. Hence burst two thunder claps—the Revolutions of 1640 and 1688. All the old economic forms, the social relations corresponding to them, the political system which was the official expression of the old civil society, were destroyed in England. Thus the economic forms in which men produce, consume, exchange, are *transitory and historical*. With the acquisition of new productive faculties men change their mode of production and with the mode of production they change all the economic relations which have been merely the necessary relations of this particular mode of production.

This is what M. Proudhon has not understood and still less demonstrated. M. Proudhon, incapable of following the real movement of history, produces a phantasmagoria which presumptuously claims to be a dialectical phantasmagoria. He does not feel the need of speaking of the seventeenth, the eighteenth or the nineteenth century, for his history proceeds in the misty realm of imagination and rises far above time and space. In short, it is not history but old Hegelian junk, it is not profane history—a history of man—but sacred history—a history of ideas. From his point of view man is only the instrument of which the idea or the eternal reason makes use in order to unfold itself. The *evolutions* of which M. Proudhon speaks are understood to be evolutions such as are accomplished within the mystic womb of the absolute idea. If you tear the veil from this mystical language, what it comes to is that M. Proudhon is offering you the order in which economic categories arrange themselves inside

his own head. It will not require great exertion on my part to prove to you that it is the order of a very disorderly mind.

M. Proudhon begins his book with a dissertation on *value*, which is his pet subject. I will not enter on an examination of this dissertation today.

The series of economic evolutions of the eternal reason begins with *division of labour*. To M. Proudhon division of labour is a perfectly simple thing. But was not the caste regime also a particular division of labour? Was not the regime of the corporations another division of labour? And is not the division of labour under the system of manufacture, which in England begins in the middle of the seventeenth century and comes to an end in the last part of the eighteenth, also totally different from the division of labour in large-scale, modern industry?

M. Proudhon is so far from the truth that he neglects what even the profane economists attend to. When he talks about division of labour he does not feel it necessary to mention the world *market*. Now then, must not the division of labour in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when there were still no colonies, when America did not as yet exist for Europe, and Eastern Asia existed for her only through the medium of Constantinople, have been fundamentally different from what it was in the seventeenth century when colonies were already developed?

And that is not all. Is the whole inner organization of nations with all their international relations anything other than the expression of a particular division of labour? And must not these change when the division of labour changes?

M. Proudhon has so little understood the problem of the division of labour that he never even mentions the separation of town and country, which took place in Germany, for instance, from the ninth to the twelfth century. Thus, to M. Proudhon, since he knows neither its origin nor its development, this separation is an eternal law. All through his book he speaks as if this creation of a particular mode of production would endure until the end of time. All that M. Proudhon says about the division of labour is only a summary, and moreover a very superficial, very incomplete summary, of what Adam Smith and a thousand others have said before him.

The second evolution is *machinery*. The connection between the division of labour and machinery is entirely mystical to M. Proudhon. Each kind of division of labour had its specific instruments of production. Between the middle of the seventeenth and the middle of the eighteenth century, for instance, people did not make everything by hand. There were machines and very complicated ones, such as looms, ships, levers, etc.

Thus there is nothing more absurd than to derive machinery from division of labour in general.

I may also remark, by the way, that just as M. Proudhon has not understood the historical origin of machinery, he has still less understood its development. One can say that up to the year 1825—the period of the first general crisis—the demands of consumption in general increased more rapidly than production, and the development of machinery was a necessary consequence of the needs of the market. Since 1825, the invention and application of machinery has been simply the result of the war between employers and workers. And this is only true of England. As for the European nations, they were driven to adopt machinery owing to English competition both in their home markets and on the world market. Finally, in North America the introduction of machinery was due both to competition with other countries and to lack of hands, that is, to the disproportion between the population of North America and its industrial needs. From these facts you can see what sagacity M. Proudhon develops when he conjures up the spectre of competition as the third evolution, the antithesis to machinery!

Lastly and in general, it is altogether absurd to make *machinery* an economic category alongside with division of labour, competition, credit, etc.

Machinery is no more an economic category than the ox which draws the plough. The *application* of machinery in the present day is one of the relations of our present economic system, but the way in which machinery is utilized is totally distinct from the machinery itself. Powder remains the same whether it is used to wound a man or to dress his wounds.

M. Proudhon surpasses himself when he allows competition, monopoly, taxes or police, balance of trade, credit and property to develop inside his head in the order in which I have mentioned them. Nearly all credit institutions had been developed in England by the beginning of the eighteenth century, before the discovery of machinery. Public credit was only a fresh method of increasing taxation and satisfying the new demands created by the rise of the bourgeoisie to power. Finally, the last category in M. Proudhon's system is constituted by *property*. In the real world, on the other hand, the division of labour and all M. Proudhon's other categories are social relations forming in their entirety what is today known as *property*: outside these relations bourgeois property is nothing but a metaphysical or juristic illusion. The property of a different epoch, feudal property, develops in a series of entirely different social relations. M. Proudhon, by establishing property as an independent relation, commits more than a mistake in method: he clearly shows that he

has not grasped the bond which holds together all forms of *bourgeois* production, that he has not understood the *historical* and *transitory* character of the forms of production in a particular epoch. M. Proudhon, who does not regard our social institutions as historical products, who understands neither their origin nor their development, can only produce dogmatic criticism of them.

Thus M. Proudhon is obliged to take refuge in a *fiction* in order to explain development. He imagines that division of labour, credit, machinery, etc., were all invented to serve his fixed idea, the idea of equality. His explanation is sublimely naïve. These things were invented in the interests of equality but unfortunately they turned against equality. This constitutes his whole argument. In other words, he makes a gratuitous assumption and then, as the actual development contradicts his fiction at every step, he concludes that there is a contradiction. He conceals from you the fact that the contradiction exists solely between his fixed ideas and the real movement.

Hence M. Proudhon, mainly because he lacks the historical knowledge, has not perceived that as men develop their productive faculties, that is, as they live, they develop certain relations with one another and that the nature of these relations necessarily changes with the modification and growth of the productive faculties. He has not perceived that *economic categories* are only *abstractions* of these actual relations and are truths only while these relations exist. He therefore falls into the error of the bourgeois economists, who regard these economic categories as eternal and not as historical laws, which are only laws for a particular historical development, for a definite development of the productive forces. Instead, therefore, of regarding the politico-economic categories as abstractions of the real, transitory, historic social relations, M. Proudhon, thanks to a mystic inversion, sees in the real relations only embodiments of these abstractions. These abstractions themselves are formulas which have been slumbering in the bosom of god the father since the beginning of the world.

But here our good M. Proudhon falls into severe intellectual convulsions. If all these economic categories are emanations from the heart of god, are the hidden and eternal life of man, how does it come about, first, that there is such a thing as development, and secondly, that M. Proudhon is not a conservative? He explains these evident contradictions by a whole system of antagonism.

To throw light on this system of antagonism, let us take an example.

*Monopoly* is a good thing, because it is an economic category and therefore an emanation of god. Competition is a good thing

because it is also an economic category. But what is not good is the reality of monopoly and the reality of competition. What is still worse is the fact that competition and monopoly devour each other. What is to be done? As these two eternal ideas of god contradict each other, it seems obvious to him that there is also within the bosom of god a synthesis of them both, in which the evils of monopoly are balanced by competition and *vice versa*. As a result of the struggle between the two ideas only their good side will come into view. One must abstract this secret idea from god and then apply it, and everything will be for the best; the synthetic formula which lies hidden in the darkness of the impersonal reason of man must be revealed. M. Proudhon does not hesitate for a moment to come forward as the revealer.

But look for a moment at real life. In the economic life of the present time you find not only competition and monopoly but also their synthesis, which is not a *formula* but a *movement*. Monopoly produces competition, competition produces monopoly. But this equation, far from removing the difficulties of the present situation, as the bourgeois economists imagine it does, results in a situation still more difficult and confused. If therefore you alter the basis on which present-day economic relations rest, if you destroy the present *mode* of production, then you will not only destroy competition, monopoly and their antagonism, but also their unity, their synthesis, the movement which is the real equilibrium of competition and monopoly.

Now I will give you an example of M. Proudhon's dialectics.

*Freedom* and *slavery* constitute an antagonism. I need not speak of the good and bad sides of freedom; nor, speaking of slavery, need I dwell on its bad sides. The only thing that has to be explained is its good side. We are not dealing with indirect slavery, the slavery of the proletarian, but with direct slavery, the slavery of the black races in Surinam, in Brazil, in the southern states of North America.

Direct slavery is as much the pivot of our industrialism today as machinery, credit, etc. Without slavery no cotton; without cotton no modern industry. Slavery has given value to the colonies; the colonies have created world trade; world trade is the necessary condition of large-scale machine industry. Thus, before the traffic in Negroes began, the colonies supplied the Old World with only very few products and made no visible change in the face of the earth. Slavery is, therefore, an economic category of the highest importance. Without slavery North America, the most progressive country, would be transformed into a patriarchal land. You have only to wipe North America off the map of the nations and you get

anarchy, the total decay of trade and of modern civilization. But to let slavery disappear is to wipe North America off the map of the nations. And therefore, because it is an economic category, we find slavery in every nation since the world began. Modern nations have merely known how to disguise the slavery within their own countries while they openly imported it into the New World. After these observations on slavery, how will our worthy M. Proudhon proceed? He will look for the synthesis between freedom and slavery, the golden mean or equilibrium between slavery and freedom.

M. Proudhon has very well grasped the fact that men produce cloth, linen, silks, and he deserves great credit for having grasped this small amount! What he has not grasped is that these men, according to their faculties, also produce the *social relations* amid which they prepare cloth and linen. Still less has he understood that men, who produce their social relations in accordance with their material productivity, also produce *ideas, categories*, that is to say, the abstract ideal expressions of these same social relations. Thus the categories are no more eternal than the relations they express. They are historical and transitory products. For M. Proudhon, on the contrary, abstractions, categories, are the primordial cause. According to him they, and not men, make history. The *abstraction*, the *category taken as such*, that is, apart from men and their material activities, is of course immortal, unchangeable, unmoved; it is but an entity of pure reason; which is only another way of saying that the abstraction as such is abstract. An admirable *tautology*!

Thus, regarded in form as categories, economic relations are to M. Proudhon eternal formulas without origin or progress.

Let us put it in another way: M. Proudhon does not directly state that *bourgeois life* is to him an *eternal verity*; he states it indirectly by deifying the categories which express bourgeois relations in the form of thought. He takes the products of bourgeois society for spontaneous beings, endowed with lives of their own, eternal as soon as they present themselves to his mind in the form of categories, of thought. So he does not rise above the bourgeois horizon. As he is operating with bourgeois ideas, the eternal truth of which he presupposes, he seeks a synthesis of these ideas, their equilibrium, and does not see that the present method by which they reach equilibrium is the only possible one.

Indeed he does what all good bourgeois do. They all tell you that in principle, that is, considered as abstract ideas, competition, monopoly, etc., are the only basis of life, but that in practice they leave much to be desired. They all want competition without the lethal effects of competition. They all want the impossible, namely, the con-



ditions of bourgeois life without the necessary consequences of those conditions. None of them understands that the bourgeois form of production is historical and transitory, just as the feudal form was. This mistake arises from the fact that the bourgeois man is to them the only possible basis of every society, that they cannot imagine a system of society in which men have ceased to be bourgeois.

M. Proudhon is, therefore, necessarily *doctrinaire*. To him the historical movement, which is turning the present-day world upside down, reduces itself for him to the problem of discovering the correct equilibrium, the synthesis, of two bourgeois thoughts. And so the clever fellow by virtue of his subtlety discovers the hidden thought of god, the unity of two isolated thoughts—which are only isolated because M. Proudhon has isolated them from practical life, from present-day production, which is the combination of the realities which they express. In place of the great historical movement arising from the conflict between the productive forces of men already acquired and their social relations, which no longer correspond to these productive forces; in place of the terrible wars which are being prepared between the different classes within each nation and between different nations; in place of the practical and violent action of the masses by which alone these conflicts can be resolved—in place of this vast, prolonged and complicated movement, M. Proudhon supplies the whimsical motion of his own head. So it is the men of learning that make history, the men who know how to purloin god's secret thoughts. The common people have only to apply their revelations. You will now understand why M. Proudhon is the declared enemy of every political movement. The solution of present-day problems does not lie for him in public action but in the dialectical rotations of his head. Since to him the categories are the motive force, it is not necessary to change practical life in order to change the categories. Quite the contrary. One must change the categories and the consequence will be a change of the existing society.

In his desire to reconcile the contradictions M. Proudhon does not even ask if the very basis of those contradictions must not be overthrown. He is exactly like the political doctrinaire who wants to have the king and the chamber of deputies and the chamber of peers as integral parts of social life, as eternal categories. All he is looking for is a new formula by which to establish an equilibrium between these powers whose equilibrium consists precisely in the present movement in which one power is now the conqueror and now the slave of the other. Thus in the eighteenth century a multitude of mediocre minds was busy finding the true formula which would bring the so-

cial estates, nobility, king, parliament, etc., into equilibrium, and they woke up one morning to find that there was in fact no longer any king, parliament or nobility. The true equilibrium in this antagonism was the overthrow of all the social relations which served as a basis for these feudal existences and for the antagonism of these feudal existences.

Because M. Proudhon places eternal ideas, the categories of pure reason, on the one side and human beings and their practical life, which according to him is the application of these categories, on the other, one finds with him from the beginning a *dualism* between life and ideas, between soul and body, a dualism which recurs in many forms. You can see now that this antagonism is nothing but the incapacity of M. Proudhon to understand the profane origin and history of the categories which he deifies.

My letter is already too long for me to speak of the absurd case which M. Proudhon puts up against Communism. For the moment you will grant me that a man who has not understood the present state of society may be expected to understand still less the movement which is tending to overthrow it, and the literary expressions of this revolutionary movement.

The *sole point* on which I am in complete agreement with M. Proudhon is his disgust with sentimental socialistic day dreams. I had already, before him, drawn much enmity upon myself by persiflage anent mutton-headed, sentimental, utopian, Socialism. But is not M. Proudhon strangely deluding himself when he sets up his petty-bourgeois sentimentality—I am referring to his declamations about home, conjugal love and all such banalities—in opposition to socialist sentimentality, which in Fourier, for example, goes much deeper than the pretentious platitudes of our worthy Proudhon? He himself is so thoroughly conscious of the emptiness of his arguments, of his utter incapacity for speaking about these things, that he gives sudden vent to furious tirades, waxes righteously indignant [*irae hominis probi*], vociferates, foams at the mouth, curses, denounces, cries shame and murder, beats his breast and boasts before god and man that he is unspotted by the socialist infamies! He does not seriously criticize socialist sentimentalities, or what he regards as such. Like a holy man, a pope, he excommunicates poor sinners and sings the glories of the petty bourgeoisie and of the miserable amorous and patriarchal illusions of the domestic hearth. And this is no accident. From head to foot M. Proudhon is the philosopher and economist of the petty bourgeoisie. In an advanced society the *petty bourgeois* necessarily becomes from his very position a Socialist on the one side and an economist on the other; that is to say, he is dazed by the magnificence of the big bour-

geoisie and has sympathy for the sufferings of the people. He is at once both bourgeois and man of the people. Deep down in his heart he flatters himself that he is impartial and has found the right equilibrium, which claims to be something different from the golden mean. A petty bourgeois of this type glorifies *contradiction* because contradiction is the quintessence of his being. He is himself nothing but social contradiction in action. He must justify in theory what he is in practice, and M. Proudhon has the merit of being the scientific interpreter of the French petty bourgeoisie—a genuine merit, because the petty bourgeoisie will form an integral part of all the impending social revolutions.

I wish I could have sent you my book on political economy with this letter, but it has so far been impossible for me to get this work printed, as well as the criticism of the German philosophers and Socialists of which I spoke to you in Brussels. You would never believe the difficulties which a publication of this kind comes up against in Germany, from the police on the one hand, and from the booksellers, who are themselves the interested representatives of all the tendencies I am attacking, on the other. And as for our Party, it is not merely that it is poor, but a large section of the German Communist Party is angry with me for opposing their utopias and declamations. . . .

Written in French

## MARX TO J. WEYDEMEYER

London, March 5, 1852

. . . And now as to myself, no credit is due to me for discovering the existence of classes in modern society, nor yet the struggle between them. Long before me bourgeois historians had described the historical development of this struggle of the classes and bourgeois economists the economic anatomy of the classes. What I did that was new was to prove: 1) that the *existence of classes* is only bound up with *particular historical phases in the development of production*; 2) that the class struggle necessarily leads to the *dictatorship of the proletariat*; 3) that this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the *abolition of all classes* and to a *classless society*. . . .

## MARX TO ENGELS

London, April 16, 1856

... The day before yesterday there was a little banquet to celebrate the anniversary of the *People's Paper*.<sup>1</sup> On this occasion I accepted the invitation, as the times seemed to demand it of me, and all the more since I *alone* (as announced in the paper) of all the refugees had been invited and the first toast also fell to me, I being scheduled to speak for the sovereignty of the proletariat in all countries. So I made a little English speech which I, however, shall not have printed.<sup>2</sup> The aim which I had in mind was achieved. M. Talandier, who had to buy his ticket for 2s. 6d., and the rest of the gang of French and other refugees have convinced themselves that we are the only "intimate" allies of the Chartists and that though we refrain from public demonstrations and leave open flirtation with Chartism to the Frenchmen, we have it in our power to reoccupy at any time the position already historically due us. This has become all the more necessary because at the joint meeting of February 25, under Pyat's chairmanship, that German ignoramus *Scherzer* (old boy) came forward and in truly awful guildsman's style, denounced the German "men of learning," the "intellectual workers" who had left them (the ignoramuses) in the lurch and thus force them to discredit themselves in front of the other nations. You know this *Scherzer* from Paris days. I have had some more meetings with friend *Schapper* and have found him a very repentant sinner. The retirement in which he has lived for the last two years seems rather to have sharpened his mental powers. You will understand that in any eventuality it may always be good to have the man at hand, and still more out of Willich's hands. *Schapper* is now furious with the ignoramuses at Windmill Street.<sup>3</sup>

I'll attend to your letter to Steffen. You should have kept Levi's letter there in your possession. Do that in general with all letters I don't ask you to send back to me. The less they are mailed the better. I fully agree with you about the Rhine province. The fatal thing for us is that I see something looming in the future which will smack of "treason to the fatherland." It will depend very much on

<sup>1</sup> *People's Paper*: Organ of the Chartists published in London 1852-58. Its editor was Ernest Jones.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> Marx's speech was published in the report on the banquet which appeared in the *People's Paper* of April 19, 1856. See K. Marx, *Selected works*, vol. II, Moscow 1936, pp. 427-29.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup> In Windmill Street, London, was the house in which meetings of the German Workers' Educational Society took place.—*Ed.*

the turn of things in Berlin whether we are not forced into a position similar to that of the Mayence Clubbists<sup>1</sup> in the old revolution. That would be hard. We who are so enlightened about our worthy brothers on the other side of the Rhine! The whole thing in Germany will depend on the possibility of backing the proletarian revolution by some second edition of the Peasant War. Then the affair will be splendid. . . .

## MARX TO ENGELS

London, September 25, 1857

. . . Your "Army"<sup>2</sup> is very well done; only its size made me feel as if I had been hit over the head, for it must do you a lot of harm to work so much. If I had known that you were going to work far into the night, I would rather have let the whole matter go hang.

The history of the *army* brings out more clearly than anything else the correctness of our conception of the connection between the productive forces and social relations. In general, the army is important for economic development. For instance, it was in the army that the ancients first developed a complete wage system. Similarly among the Romans the *peculium castrense*<sup>3</sup> was the first legal form in which the right of others than fathers of families to moveable property was recognized. So also the guild system among the corporation of *fabri*.<sup>4</sup> Here too the first use of machinery on a large scale. Even the special value of metals and their use as money appears to have been originally based—as soon as Grimm's stone age was passed—on their military significance. The division of labour *within* one branch was also first carried out in the armies. The whole history of the forms of bourgeois society is very strikingly epitomized here. If some day you can find time you must work the thing out from this point of view.

In my opinion, the only points which have been overlooked in your account are: 1) The first complete appearance of mercenary troops on a large scale and at once among the Carthaginians. (For our private use I will look up a book on the Carthaginian army written by a Berlin man, which I only came to know later.) 2) The

<sup>1</sup> *Mayence Clubbists*: Marx refers to the members of the Jacobin Club in Mayence who joined the French revolutionary troops that occupied Mayence in 1792.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> Reference to Engels' article "The Army," printed in the *New American Cyclopaedia*.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup> *Peculium castrense*: Camp property.—*Ed.*

<sup>4</sup> *Fabri*: Artisans attached to the army.—*Ed.*

development of the army system in Italy in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Tactical tricks, at any rate, were developed here. Extremely humorous too is Machiavelli's description (which I will copy out for you) in his history of Florence of the way the Condottieri fought one another. (No, when I come to see you in Brighton—when?—I would rather bring the volume of Machiavelli with me. His history of Florence is a masterpiece.) And finally, 3) Asiatic military system as it first appeared among the Persians and then, though modified in a great variety of ways, among the Mongols, Turks, etc. . . .

## MARX TO L. KUGELMANN

London, February 23, 1865

I received your, to me very interesting, letter yesterday and shall now reply to the separate points you raise.

First of all I shall briefly describe my attitude to *Lassalle*. While he was engaged in agitation relations between us were suspended: 1) because of his self-praise-exuding braggadocio, to which he added the most shameless plagiarism from my writings and those of others; 2) because I *condemned* his *political* tactics; 3) because, even *before* he began his agitation, I fully explained and "proved" to him here in London that direct *socialist* interference by a "*State of PRUSSIA*" was nonsense. In his letters to me (from 1848 to 1863), as in our personal meetings, he always declared himself an adherent of the party which I represented. As soon as he had convinced himself, in London (end of 1862), that he could not play his games *with* me he decided to come out as the "workers' dictator" *against* me and the old party. In spite of all that I recognized his services as an agitator, although towards the end of his brief career even that agitation appeared to me of a more and more ambiguous character. His sudden death, old friendship, wailing letters from Countess Hatzfeldt, indignation over the *cowardly impertinence* of the bourgeois press towards one whom in his lifetime they had so greatly feared—all that induced me to publish a short statement against the wretched Blind, which did not, however, deal with the *content* of Lassalle's doings (Hatzfeldt sent the statement to the *Nordstern*<sup>1</sup>). For the same reasons, and in the hope of being able to remove elements which appeared dangerous to me, Engels and I promised to contribute to the *Social-*

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<sup>1</sup> *Nordstern* [*Northern Star*]: A weekly of the Lassallean trend which appeared in Hamburg in 1860-66.—Ed.

*Demokrat*<sup>1</sup> (it has published a translation of the *Address*<sup>2</sup> and at its request I wrote an article about Proudhon on the death of the latter) and, after Schweitzer had sent us a *satisfactory program of his editorial board*, we allowed our names to be given out as contributors. We had a further guarantee in the presence of *W. Liebknecht* as an unofficial member of the editorial board. However, it soon became clear—the proofs fell into our hands—that *Lassalle* had in fact *betrayed* the Party. He had entered into a regular contract with Bismarck (of course, *without* having any sort of guarantees in his hands). At the end of September 1864 he was to go to Hamburg and there (together with that crazy Schramm and the Prussian police spy Marr) “*force*” Bismarck to incorporate Schleswig-Holstein, that is, to proclaim its incorporation in the name of the “workers,” etc., in return for which Bismarck promised universal suffrage and a few socialist charlatanries. It is a pity that Lassalle could not play the comedy through to the end. It would have made him look damned ridiculous and foolish! And it would have put a stop forever to all attempts of that sort.

Lassalle went astray in this fashion because he was a “practical politician” [“*Realpolitiker*”] of the type of Herr Miquel, but cut on a larger pattern and with bigger aims. (By the by, I had long ago seen through Miquel sufficiently to explain his coming forward by the fact that the National Association<sup>3</sup> offered an excellent excuse for a petty *Hanoverian* lawyer to make his voice heard in Germany, outside his own four walls, and thus cause the enhanced “*reality*” of himself to assert itself reactively in his Hanoverian homeland, playing the “*Hanoverian*” Mirabeau under “*Prussian*” auspices.) Just as Miquel and his present friends snatched at the “new era” inaugurated by the Prussian prince regent, in order to engage in the sport of joining the National Association and to fasten on to the “Prussian top,” just as they developed their “civic pride” generally under *Prussian auspices*, so Lassalle wanted to play the Marquis Posa of the proletariat with Philip II of the Uckermark, Bismarck acting as procurer between him and the Prussian kingdom. He only imitated the gentlemen of the National Association; but while these invoked the Prussian “reaction” in the interests of the middle class, Lassalle shook hands with Bismarck in the interests

<sup>1</sup> *Social-Demokrat*: Published by Johann Baptist von Schweitzer, a Lassallean, in Berlin since the end of 1864.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> The Inaugural Address.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup> The National Association [*Nationalverein*], founded in the autumn of 1859, was the political organization of the German big bourgeoisie which aimed at the unification of all the German states, with the exception of Austria, under the hegemony of Prussia. It subsequently supported Bismarck's policy.—*Ed.*

of the proletariat. These gentlemen had greater justification than Lassalle, in so far as the bourgeois is accustomed to regard the interest immediately in front of his nose as "*reality*," and as in fact this class has concluded a compromise everywhere, even with feudalism, whereas, in the very nature of the case, the working class must be sincerely "revolutionary."

For a theatrically vain character like Lassalle (who was not, however, to be bribed by paltry trash like office, a mayoralty, etc.), it was a most tempting thought: an act directly on behalf of the proletariat, executed by Ferdinand Lassalle! He was in fact too ignorant of the real economic conditions attending such an act to be critically true to himself. The German workers, on the other hand, were too "*demoralized*" by the despicable "*practical politics*" which had induced the German bourgeoisie to tolerate the reaction of 1849-59 and witness the stupefying of the people, not to hail such a quack saviour, who promised to get them at one bound into the promised land.

Well, to pick up again the thread broken off above. Hardly was the *Social-Demokrat* founded when it became clear that old Hatzfeldt subsequently wanted to execute Lassalle's "testament." Through Wagener (of the *Kreuzzeitung*) she was in touch with Bismarck. She placed the *General Association of German Workers*, the *Social-Demokrat*, etc., at his disposal. The annexation of Schleswig-Holstein was to be proclaimed in the *Social-Demokrat*, Bismarck to be recognized in general as patron, etc. The whole pretty plan was *frustrated* because we had Liebknecht in Berlin and on the editorial board of the *Social-Demokrat*. Although Engels and I were not pleased with the editorial board of the paper, with its lickspittle cult of Lassalle, its occasional coquetting with Bismarck, etc., it was, of course, more important to stand publicly by the paper for the time being in order to thwart old Hatzfeldt's intrigues and the complete compromising of the workers' party. We therefore made *bonne mine à mauvais jeu*,<sup>1</sup> although *privatim*<sup>2</sup> we were always writing to the *Social-Demokrat* that Bismarck must be opposed just as much as the progressives. We even put up with the *intrigues* of that affected coxcomb Bernhard Becker—who takes the importance bequeathed him by Lassalle's testament quite seriously—*against* the *International Working Men's Association*.

Meanwhile Herr Schweitzer's articles in the *Social-Demokrat* became more and more Bismarckian. I had written to him earlier that the progressives could be *intimidated* on the "question, of

<sup>1</sup> The best of a bad bargain.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> Privately.—Ed.



combinations," but that the *Prussian government would never, under any circumstances*, concede the complete abolition of the Combination Laws, because that would involve making a breach in the bureaucracy, would make the workers of age, would shatter the rules governing hinds [*Gesindeordnung*], abolish the aristocracy's flogging of posteriors in the countryside, etc., etc., which Bismarck could never allow, which was altogether incompatible with the Prussian *bureaucratic* state. I added that if the Chamber rejected the Combination Laws, the government would have recourse to *phrases* (such phrases, for example, as that the social question demanded "more thoroughgoing" measures, etc.) in order to retain them. All this proved to be correct. And what did Herr von Schweitzer do? He wrote an article for Bismarck and saves all his heroics against such *infiniment petits*<sup>1</sup> as Schulze, Faucher, etc.

I think that Schweitzer and Co. have *honest* intentions, but they are "*practical politicians*." They want to take *existing* circumstances into consideration and refuse to surrender this *privilege* of "practical politics" to the exclusive use of Messrs. Miquel and Co. (The latter seem to want to reserve to themselves the right of intermixture with the Prussian government.) They know that the workers' press and the workers' movement in Prussia (and therefore in the rest of Germany) exist solely by the grace of the police. So they want to take the circumstances as they are, and not irritate the government, etc., just like our "*republican*" practical politicians, who are willing to "take along with them" a Hohenzollern emperor. But since I am not a "practical politician," I together with Engels have found it necessary to sever all connections with the *Social-Demokrat* in a public declaration (which you will probably soon see in one paper or another).

You will understand at the same time why at the present moment I can do *nothing* in Prussia. The government there has refused point-blank to repatriate me as a Prussian citizen. I should only be allowed to *agitate* there in a form acceptable to Herr v. Bismarck.

I prefer a hundred times over my agitation here through the *International Association*.<sup>2</sup> Its influence on the *English* proletariat is direct and of the greatest importance. We are making a stir here now on the general suffrage question, which of course has a *significance here quite different* from what it has in Prussia.

On the whole the progress of this "Association" is *beyond all expectation*, here, in Paris, in Belgium, Switzerland, and Italy. Only in Germany, of course, we stand in opposition to Lassalle's succes-

<sup>1</sup> Infinitely small people.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> The reference is to the First International.—Ed.

sors, who: 1) are stupidly afraid of losing their importance; 2) are aware of my avowed opposition to what the Germans call "*Realpolitik*." (It is this sort of "*reality*" which places Germany so far behind all civilized countries.)

Since anybody who pays one shilling for a card can become a member of the Association; since the French chose this form of individual membership (ditto the Belgians), because the law prevents them from joining us as an "association," and since the situation is similar in Germany, I have now decided to ask my friends here and in Germany to form small *sociétés* wherever they are—the number of members does not matter—each member of which will take out an English membership card. Since the English society is *public*, nothing stands in the way of such procedure even in France. I would be glad if you as well as the people closest to you were to get in touch with London in this way. . . .

## MARX TO L. KUGELMANN

London, October 9, 1866

. . . I had great fears for the first Congress at Geneva. On the whole, however, it turned out better than I expected.<sup>1</sup> The effect in France, England and America was un hoped for. I could not, and did not want to go there, but wrote the program for the London delegation. I deliberately restricted it to those points which allow of immediate agreement and concerted action by the workers, and give direct nourishment and impetus to the requirements of the class struggle and the organization of the workers into a class. The Parisian gentlemen had their heads full of the emptiest Proudhonist phrases. They babble about science and know nothing. They scorn all *revolutionary* action, that is, action arising out of the class struggle itself, all concentrated social movements, and therefore also those which can be carried through by *political* means (for instance, the *legal* shortening of the working day). Under the *pretext of freedom*, and of anti-governmentalism or anti-authoritarian individualism, these gentlemen, who for sixteen years have so quietly endured the most miserable despotism, and still endure it, actually preach ordinary bourgeois economy, only Proudhonistically idealized! Proudhon has done enormous mischief. His sham criticism and sham opposition to the utopians (he himself is only a petty-bour-

<sup>1</sup> The Geneva Congress of the First International (September 3-8, 1866) ended in a decisive defeat of the Proudhonists. The congress approved the Rules of the International written by Marx, and Marx's instructions formed the basis on which its resolutions were adopted.—*Ed.*

geois utopian, whereas in the utopias of a Fourier, an Owen, etc., there is the presentiment and imaginative expression of a new world) attracted and corrupted first the "*jeunesse brillante*,"<sup>1</sup> the students, and then the workmen, particularly those of Paris, who, as workers in luxury trades, are strongly attached, without knowing it, to the old rubbish. Ignorant, vain, presumptuous, chattering, blusteringly arrogant, they were on the point of spoiling everything, for they came to the Congress in numbers which bore no relation whatever to the number of their members. In the report I shall, incidentally, rap them on the knuckles.

The American Workers' Congress at Baltimore, which took place at the same time, caused me great joy. The slogan there was organization for the struggle against capital, and, remarkably enough, most of the demands which I drew up for Geneva were also put forward there by the right instinct of the workers.

The Reform movement<sup>2</sup> here, which our Central Council called into existence (*quorum magna pars fui*<sup>3</sup>) has now reached immense and irresistible dimensions. I have kept behind the scenes all the time and do not trouble myself further about the affair, now it has been set going.

## MARX TO L. KUGELMANN

London, July 11, 1868

... As for the *Centralblatt*, the man<sup>4</sup> is making the greatest possible concession in admitting that, if one means anything at all by value, the conclusions I draw must be accepted. The unfortunate fellow does not see that, even if there were no chapter on "value" in my book, the analysis of the real relationships which I give would contain the proof and demonstration of the real value relation. All that palaver about the necessity of proving the concept of value comes from complete ignorance both of the subject dealt with and of scientific method. Every child knows that a nation which ceased to work, I will not say for a year, but even for a few weeks, would perish. Every child knows, too, that the masses of products corresponding to the different needs require different and quantitatively determined masses of the total labour of society.

<sup>1</sup> Brilliant youth.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> Reform movement: Movement for the extension of the franchise in England, which ended in the Reform of 1867.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup> In which I played a great part.—Ed.

<sup>4</sup> The reference is to the author of a review on *Capital* in No. 28 of the Leipzig *Literarisches Centralblatt* [*Central Literary Newspaper*] for 1868.—Ed.

That this *necessity* of the *distribution* of social labour in definite proportions cannot possibly be done away with by a *particular form* of social production but can only change the *form* in which it *appears*, is self-evident. No natural laws can be done away with. What can change, in historically different circumstances, is only the *form* in which these laws operate. And the form in which this proportional distribution of labour operates, in a state of society where the interconnection of social labour is manifested in the *private exchange* of the individual products of labour, is precisely the *exchange value* of these products.

Science consists precisely in demonstrating *how* the law of value operates. So that if one wanted at the very beginning to "explain" all the phenomena which apparently contradict that law, one would have to present the science *before* the science. It is precisely Ricardo's mistake that in his first chapter on value he takes as given all possible categories which have still to be developed for us, in order to prove their conformity with the law of value.

On the other hand, as you correctly assumed, the *history of the theory* certainly shows that the concept of the value relation has *always* been the *same*—more or less clear, hedged more or less with illusions or scientifically more or less precise. Since the thought process itself grows out of the relations, is itself a *natural process*, thinking that really comprehends must always be the same, and can vary only gradually, according to maturity of development, including the development of the organ by which the thinking is done. Everything else is drivel.

The vulgar economist has not the faintest idea that the actual everyday exchange relations can *not be directly identical* with the magnitudes of value. The point of bourgeois society consists precisely in this, that *a priori* there is no conscious, social regulation of production. The rational and naturally necessary asserts itself only as a blindly working average. And then the vulgar economist thinks he has made a great discovery when, as against the revelation of the inner interconnection, he proudly claims that in appearance things look different. In fact, he is boasting that he holds fast to appearance, and takes it for the last word. Why, then, have any science at all?

But the matter has also another background. Once the interconnection is grasped, all theoretical belief in the permanent necessity of existing conditions collapses before their collapse in practice. Here, therefore, it is absolutely in the interest of the ruling classes to perpetuate this unthinking confusion. And for what other purpose are the sycophantic babblers paid, who have no other scientific trump to play save that in political economy one should not think at all?

But *satis superque*.<sup>1</sup> In any case it shows what these priests of the bourgeoisie have come down to, when workers and even manufacturers and merchants understand my book and find their way about in it, while these “learned scribes” (!) complain that I make excessive demands on their understanding. . . .

## MARX TO L. KUGELMANN

London, April 12, 1871

. . . Yesterday we received the by no means tranquillizing news that Lafargue (not Laura) was at present in Paris.

If you look at the last chapter of my *Eighteenth Brumaire*, you will find that I say that the next attempt of the French Revolution will be no longer, as before, to transfer the bureaucratic-military machine from one hand to another, but to *smash* it, and this is the preliminary condition for every real people's revolution on the continent. And this is what our heroic Party comrades in Paris are attempting. What elasticity, what historical initiative, what a capacity for sacrifice in these Parisians! After six months of hunger and ruin, caused by internal treachery more even than by the external enemy, they rise, beneath Prussian bayonets, as if there had never been a war between France and Germany and the enemy were not still at the gates of Paris! History has no like example of like greatness! If they are defeated only their “good nature” will be to blame. They should have marched at once on Versailles, after first Vinoy and then the reactionary section of the Paris National Guard had themselves retreated. They missed their opportunity because of conscientious scruples. They did not want to *start a civil war*, as if that mischievous abortion Thiers had not already started the civil war with his attempt to disarm Paris! Second mistake: The Central Committee surrendered its power too soon, to make way for the Commune. Again from a too “honourable” scrupulosity! However that may be, the present rising in Paris—even if it be crushed by the wolves, swine and vile curs of the old society—is the most glorious deed of our Party since the June insurrection in Paris. Compare these Parisians, storming heaven, with the slaves to heaven of the German-Prussian Holy Roman Empire, with its posthumous masquerades reeking of the barracks, the Church, cabbage-junkerkdom and above all, of the philistine.

A propos. In the *official publication* of the list of those receiv-

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<sup>1</sup> Enough and more than enough.—*Ed.*

ing direct subsidies from L. Bonaparte's treasury there is a note that *Vogt* received 40,000 francs in August 1859! I have informed Liebknecht of this fact for further use.

You can send me the Haxthausen as *lately* I have been receiving undamaged various pamphlets, etc., not only from Germany but even from St. Petersburg.

Thanks for the various newspapers you sent me. (Please let me have more of them, for I want to write something about Germany, the Reichstag, etc.). . . .

## MARX TO L. KUGELMANN

April 17, 1871

Your letter duly received. Just at present I have my hands full. Hence only a few words. How you can compare petty-bourgeois demonstrations *à la* 13 June, 1849,<sup>1</sup> etc., with the present struggle in Paris is quite incomprehensible to me.

World history would indeed be very easy to make, if the struggle were taken up only on condition of infallibly favourable chances. It would, on the other hand, be of a very mystical nature, if "accidents" played no part. These accidents naturally form part of the general course of development and are compensated by other accidents. But acceleration and delay are very much dependent upon such "accidents," including the "accident" of the character of the people who first head the movement.

The decisively unfavourable "accident" this time is by no means to be sought in the general conditions of French society, but in the presence of the Prussians in France and their position right before Paris. Of this the Parisians were well aware. But of this, the bourgeois *canaille* of Versailles were also well aware. Precisely for that reason they presented the Parisians with the alternative of either taking up the fight or succumbing without a struggle. The demoralization of the working class in the latter case would have been a far greater misfortune than the fall of any number of "leaders." With the struggle in Paris the struggle of the working class against the capitalist class and its state has entered upon a new phase. Whatever the immediate outcome may be, a new point of departure, of importance in world history, has been gained.

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<sup>1</sup> On June 13, 1849, a demonstration was organized in Paris by the Party of the Mountain in protest against the forcible overthrow of the Republic of Rome by French troops. The demonstration was dispersed almost without an effort and merely confirmed the bankruptcy of the petty-bourgeois revolutionary democrats in France.—*Ed.*

## MARX TO F. BOLTE

London, November 23, 1871

... The *International* was founded in order to replace the socialist or semi-socialist sects by a real organization of the working class for the struggle. The original Rules and the Inaugural Address show this at the first glance. On the other hand, the *International* could not have maintained itself if the course of history had not already smashed the sectarian system. The development of the system of socialist sects and that of the real workers' movement are always inversely proportional to each other. So long as the sects are (historically) justified, the working class is not yet ripe for an independent historic movement. As soon as it has attained this maturity all sects are essentially reactionary. Nevertheless what history has shown everywhere was repeated in the history of the *International*. The antiquated attempts to re-establish itself and maintain its position within the newly achieved form.

And the history of the *International* was a *continual struggle on the part of the General Council* against the sects and amateur experiments which tried to maintain their position within the *International* itself against the real movement of the working class. This struggle was conducted at the *Congresses*, but far more in the private dealings of the General Council with the individual sections.

In Paris, as the Proudhonists (*Mutualists*<sup>1</sup>) were co-founders of the Association, they naturally had the reins in their hands there for the first few years. Later, of course, collectivist, positivist, etc., groups were formed there in opposition to them.

In Germany—the Lassalle clique. I myself went on corresponding for two years with the notorious Schweitzer and proved irrefutably to him that Lassalle's organization is nothing but a sectarian organization and as such hostile to the organization of the *real* workers' movement striven for by the *International*. He had his "reasons" for not understanding this.

At the end of 1868 the Russian Bakunin entered the *International* with the aim of forming inside it a *second International* called the "*Alliance de la Démocratie Socialiste*," with himself as leader. He—a man devoid of all theoretical knowledge—put forward the pretension of representing in this separate body the *scientific* propaganda of the *International*, and of making it the specialty of this *second International within the International*.

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<sup>1</sup> *Mutualists*: The Proudhonists called themselves such, because they put forward the slogan of what they called "mutual aid."—Ed.

His program was a hash superficially scraped together from right and left—*EQUALITY* of *CLASSES* (!), *abolition of the right of inheritance* as the *starting point* of the social movement (Saint-Simonistic nonsense), *atheism* as a *dogma* to be dictated to the members, etc., and as the main dogma (*Proudhonist*) *abstention from the political movement*.

This infant's spelling book found favour in (and still has a certain hold on) Italy and Spain, where the real conditions of the workers' movement are as yet little developed, and among a few vain, ambitious and empty doctrinaires in Latin Switzerland and in Belgium.

For M. Bakunin, doctrine (the assembled rubbish he has begged from Proudhon, Saint-Simon, etc.) was and is a secondary affair—merely a means to his personal self-assertion. While he is a nonentity as a theoretician he is in his element as an intriguer.

For years the General Council had to fight against this conspiracy (supported up to a certain point by the French Proudhonists, especially in the *South of France*). At last, by means of Conference resolutions 1, 2 and 3, IX and XVI and XVII,<sup>1</sup> it delivered its long prepared blow.

Obviously the General Council does not support in America what it combats in Europe. Resolutions 1, 2, 3 and IX now give the New York committee legal weapons with which to put an end to all sectarian formations and amateur groups, and if necessary to expel them. . . .

. . . The political movement of the working class has as its ultimate object, of course, the conquest of political power for the working class, and for this it is naturally necessary that a previous organization of the working class, arising from its economic struggles, should have been developed up to a certain point.

On the other hand, however, every movement in which the working class comes out as a *class* against the ruling classes and attempts to force them by pressure from without is a political movement. For instance, the attempt in a particular factory or even a particular trade to force a shorter working day out of the individual capitalists by strikes, etc., is a purely economic movement. On the other hand, the movement to force an eight-hour day, etc., *law* is a *political* movement. And in this way, out of the separate

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<sup>1</sup> The resolutions mentioned by Marx, passed by the London Conference of the First International (September 1871), relate to the following questions: Consolidation of the International, strengthening of centralism and of the leading role of the General Council; necessity of an independent political party of the proletariat and of the closest combination of political with economic struggle; liquidation of the Bakunist factional grouping.—*Ed.*



economic movements of the workers there grows up everywhere a *political* movement, that is to say, a movement of the *class*, with the object of achieving its interests in a general form, in a form possessing the virtue of being compulsory for society as a whole. If these movements presuppose a certain degree of previous organization they are themselves in like measure a means for the development of this organization.

Where the working class is not yet far enough advanced in its organization to undertake a decisive campaign against the collective power, that is, the political power, of the ruling classes, it must at any rate be trained for this by continual agitation against the policy of the ruling classes and adopting an attitude hostile to it. Otherwise it will remain a plaything in their hands, as the September Revolution in France showed, and as is also proved up to a certain point by the game Messrs. Gladstone and Co. have been successfully engaged in in England even up to the present time.

## ENGELS TO T. CUNO

London, January 24, 1872

. . . Bakunin, who up to 1868 had intrigued against the International, joined it after he had suffered a fiasco at the Berne Peace Congress<sup>1</sup> and at once began to conspire *within it* against the General Council. Bakunin has a peculiar theory of his own, a medley of Proudhonism and Communism, the chief point of which is, in the first place, that he does not regard capital—and therefore the class antagonism between capitalists and wage workers which has arisen through social development—but the *state* as the main evil to be abolished. While the great mass of the social-democratic workers hold our view that state power is nothing more than the organization with which the ruling classes—landlords and capitalists—have provided themselves in order to protect their social privileges, Bakunin maintains that it is the *state* which has created capital, that the capitalist has his capital *only by the grace of the state*. As, therefore, the state is the chief evil, it is above all the state which must be done away with and then capitalism will go to blazes of itself. We, on the contrary, say: Do away with capital, the concentration of all means of production in the hands of the few, and the state will fall of itself. The difference is an essential one: Without

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<sup>1</sup> The reference is to the Berne Congress of the bourgeois League of Peace and Freedom, in which Bakunin took a leading part until October 1868.—*Ed.*

a previous social revolution the abolition of the state is nonsense; the abolition of capital *is* precisely the social revolution and involves a change in the whole mode of production. Now then, inasmuch as to Bakunin the state is the main evil, nothing must be done which can maintain the existence of the state, that is, of any state, whether it be a republic, a monarchy or anything else. Hence *complete abstention from all politics*. To commit a political act, and especially to take part in an election, would be a betrayal of principle. The thing to do is to carry on propaganda, heap abuse upon the state, organize, and when *ALL* the workers are won over, that is, the majority, depose all the authorities, abolish the state and replace it by the organization of the International. This great act, with which the millennium begins, is called *social liquidation*.

All this sounds extremely radical, and is so simple that it can be learnt by heart in five minutes; that is why this theory of Bakunin's has speedily found favour in Italy and Spain among young lawyers, doctors and other doctrinaires. But the mass of the workers will never allow itself to be persuaded that the public affairs of their countries are not also their own affairs, they are by nature *political* and whoever tries to make out to them that they should leave politics alone will in the end be left alone. To preach to the workers that they should in all circumstances abstain from politics is to drive them into the arms of the priests or the bourgeois republicans.

Now, as the International, according to Bakunin, was not formed for political struggle but in order that it may at once replace the old state organization as soon as social liquidation takes place, it follows that it must come as near as possible to the Bakunist ideal of the society of the future. In this society there will above all be no *authority*, for authority=state=an absolute evil. (Indeed, how these people propose to run a factory, operate a railway or steer a ship without having in the last resort one deciding will, without single management, they of course do not tell us.) The authority of the majority over the minority also ceases. Every individual and every community is autonomous; but as to how a society, even of only two people, is possible unless each gives up some of his autonomy, Bakunin again maintains silence.

Thus, the International, too, must be arranged according to this model. Every section, and in every section every individual, is autonomous. To hell with the *Basle resolutions*,<sup>1</sup> which bestow upon the General Council a pernicious authority demoralizing

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<sup>1</sup> The reference is to the resolutions of the Basle Congress of the First International held on September 6-12, 1869.—*Ed.*

even to itself! Even if this authority is bestowed *voluntarily* it must cease just *because* it is authority!

Here you have in brief the main points of this swindle. But who are the originators of the Basle resolutions? Well, *Mr. Bakunin himself*, and company!

When these gentlemen saw at the Basle Congress that they were not getting through their plan to remove the [General] Council to Geneva, that is, to get it into their hands, they followed a different tack. They founded the *Alliance de la Démocratie Sociale*, an international association *within* the great International, on a pretext which you will encounter again today in the Bakunist Italian press, for instance, in the *Proletario* and *Gazzettino Rosa*: for the hotblooded Latin races, it is claimed, a more pronounced program is necessary than for the cold, slow-moving Northerners. This neat little scheme came to naught because of the resistance of the General Council, which of course could not tolerate any separate *international* organization *within* the International. It has since reappeared in every shape and form in connection with the endeavour of Bakunin and his people surreptitiously to substitute the Bakunin program for that of the International. On the other hand, the reactionaries, from Jules Favre and Bismarck to Mazzini, always levelled their guns precisely at the inane braggadocio of the Bakunists when it was a question of attacking the International. Hence the necessity of my statement of December 5 against Mazzini and Bakunin, which was also published in the *Gazzettino Rosa*.

The nucleus of the Bakunin crowd consists of a few dozen people in the Jura Mountains<sup>1</sup> whose whole following amounts to scarcely 200 workers. Their vanguard is made up of young lawyers, doctors and journalists in Italy who everywhere now act as spokesmen of the Italian workers; a few of their brand are in Barcelona and Madrid and every now and then you will find one—hardly ever a worker—in Lyons or Brussels; here we have a single specimen, Robin.

The conference,<sup>2</sup> convoked under the pressure of circumstances in lieu of the congress that had become impossible, supplied them with a pretext; and since most of the French fugitives in Switzerland joined their camp because they (being Proudhonists) found many a kindred soul among them and for personal reasons, they launched their campaign. Malcontent minorities and unrecognized geniuses may naturally be found everywhere in the International and these were counted upon, not without justification.

<sup>1</sup> In Western Switzerland.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> The reference is to the London Conference of the First International held on September 17-23, 1871.—*Ed.*

At present their fighting strength is as follows:

1. Bakunin himself—the Napoleon of this campaign;
2. The 200 from the Jura and the 40-50 of the French Section (fugitives in Geneva);
3. In Brussels Hins, editor of the *Liberté*, who however does *not* come out *openly* for them;
4. Here the remnants of the French Section of 1871, which we have never recognized and which has already split into three mutually hostile parts. Then there are about 20 Lassalleans of the type of Herr von Schweitzer, who had all been expelled from the German Section (because of their proposal *to withdraw from the International en masse*) and who, being advocates of extreme centralization and rigid organization, fit to a T into the league of anarchists and autonomists;

5. In Spain, a few personal friends and adherents of Bakunin, who have strongly influenced the workers, particularly in Barcelona, at least theoretically. The Spaniards, however, are very keen on organization and quick to notice any lack of it in others. How far Bakunin can count on success here will not be seen until the Spanish Congress in April, and as workers will predominate there I have no grounds for anxiety;

6. Lastly, in Italy, the Turin, Bologna and Girgenti Sections have, as far as I know, declared in favour of convening the congress *ahead of time*. The Bakunist press claims that 20 Italian sections had joined; I don't know them. At any rate, almost everywhere the leadership is in the hands of friends and adherents of Bakunin, who are making a lot of noise. But a closer examination will most likely disclose that their following is not numerous, for in the long run the bulk of the Italian workers is still pro-Mazzini and will remain so as long as the International is identified there with political abstention.

At any rate, in Italy, for the time being, it is the Bakunist crowd that has the main say. The General Council has no intention of complaining on that score; the Italians have the right to commit all the absurdities they choose and the General Council will counteract them only by way of peaceful controversy. These people also have the right to declare for the congress in the sense of the Jura people,<sup>1</sup> although in any case it is exceedingly strange that sections which have just joined and cannot be posted on anything should in such

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<sup>1</sup> The Congress of the Jura Federation, which was held in November 1871 in Sonvillier, circulated an Address to all the sections of the International. It was replete with slanderous attacks on the General Council and the decisions of the Conference of the International held in London in 1871, and demanded the immediate convocation of a world congress.—Ed.

a matter at once take sides, especially before they have heard *both* parties to the dispute! I have told the Turiners the plain and unadulterated truth about this matter and will do the same for the other sections which have made similar declarations. For every such declaration of adherence is indirectly an approval of the false accusations and lies made against the General Council in the Circular. Incidentally, the General Council will shortly issue a circular of its own in the matter.<sup>1</sup> If you can prevent the Milaners from making a similar declaration *until the circular appears* you will be satisfying the wishes of all.

The funniest thing is that these same Turiners who declare in favour of the Jura people and therefore reproach us here with authoritarianism, now suddenly demand that the General Council take such authoritarian measures against the rival *Federazione Operaia*<sup>2</sup> of Turin as it had never taken before, should excommunicate Beghelli of the *Ficcanaso*, which does not even belong to the International, etc. And all that before we have even heard what the *Federazione Operaia* has to say for itself!

Last Monday I sent you the *Révolution Sociale* with the Jura Circular, one issue of the Geneva *Égalité* (unfortunately I have no copies left of the issue containing the answer of the Geneva *Comité Fédéral*, which represents twenty times as many workers as the Jura people) and one *Volksstaat* which will show you what the people in Germany think about the case. The Saxon Land Assembly—120 delegates from 60 localities—declared *unanimously* for the General Council.

The Belgian Congress (December 25-26) demands a revision of the Rules, but at the *regular* congress (in September). From France we are receiving daily statements expressing consent. Here in England, of course, none of these intrigues find any support. The General Council will certainly not call an extraordinary congress just to please a few bumptious intriguers. So long as these gentlemen keep within the bounds of the law the General Council will gladly let them have their way. This coalition of the most diverse elements will soon fall apart; but as soon as they start anything against the Rules or congressional decisions the General Council will do its duty.

If you reflect upon the fact that these people have launched their conspiracy precisely at a moment when a general hue and cry is being raised against the International, you cannot help thinking that the international sleuths must have a hand in the game. And

<sup>1</sup> The reference is to a confidential circular drawn up by Marx and entitled *Les Prétendues Scissions dans l'Internationale* [*Sham Schisms in the International*]. It completely exposed the splitting tactics of the Bakunists.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> Workers' Federation.—Ed.

so it is. In Béziers the Geneva Bakunists have picked the central police commissioner as their correspondent! Two of the top Bakunists, Albert Richard from Lyons and Leblanc, were here and told a worker named Scholl from Lyons, to whom they addressed themselves, that the only way to overthrow Thiers was to restore Bonaparte to the throne and that they were travelling about on *Bonaparte money* to conduct *propaganda* among the fugitives *in favour of a Bonapartist restoration*! That is what these gentlemen call abstaining from politics! The *Neuer Social-Demokrat* paid by Bismarck pipes the same tune. How far the Russian police is involved in this I shall leave an open question for the present but Bakunin was up to his ears mixed up in the Nechayev affair (he denies it, of course, but we have the original Russian reports here and since Marx and I understand Russian he cannot put anything over on us). Nechayev is either a Russian *agent provocateur* or anyhow acted as if he were. Moreover, Bakunin has all kinds of suspicious people among his Russian friends.

I am very sorry you lost your position. I had expressly written to you to avoid anything that might lead to that and that your presence in Milan was much more important for the International than the small effect one could produce by *public action*; much can be accomplished clandestinely, too, etc. If I can be of assistance to you by getting you translations, etc., I shall do so with the greatest of pleasure. Just tell me *from* which languages and *into* which languages you can translate and *how* I can be useful to you.

So those police swine have also intercepted my photograph. I am enclosing another one for you and would ask you to send me two of yours, one of which is to serve the purpose of inducing Miss Marx to let you have a photograph of her father (she is the only one who still has a couple of good ones left).

I would also ask you to be somewhat cautious with *all* people connected with Bakunin. It is in all sects to stick together and intrigue. You may rest assured that *any information you give them* will immediately be passed on to Bakunin. It is one of his fundamental principles that keeping promises and suchlike are merely bourgeois prejudices, which a true revolutionist must treat with disdain to help along the cause. In Russia he says this openly, in Western Europe it is secret lore.

Write to me real soon. If we should succeed in preventing the Milan Section from joining in the chorus of the other Italian sections it would be a very good thing. . . .

## ENGELS TO A. BEBEL

London, June 20, 1873

I am answering your letter first because Liebknecht's is still with Marx, who cannot locate it just now.

It was not Hepner but York's letter to him, signed by the Committee, which caused us here to be afraid that your imprisonment would be used by the Party authorities, which unfortunately are entirely Lassallean, to transform the *Volksstaat* into an "honest" *Neuer Social-Demokrat*. York plainly confessed to such an intention, and as the Committee claimed to have the right to appoint and remove the editors the danger was surely big enough. Hepner's impending banishment further strengthened these plans. Under these circumstances it was absolutely necessary for us to know what the situation was; hence this correspondence. . . .

. . . With regard to the attitude of the Party toward Lassalleanism, you of course can judge better than we what tactics should be adopted, especially in particular cases. But there is also this to be considered. When, as in your case, one is to a certain extent in the position of a competitor to the General Association of German Workers, one is easily too considerate of one's rival and gets into the habit of always thinking of him first. But both the General Association of German Workers and the Social-Democratic Workers' Party together still form only a very small minority of the German working class. Our view, which we have found confirmed by long practice, is that the correct tactics in propaganda is not to entice away a few individuals and memberships here and there from one's opponent, but to work on the great mass which still remains inactive. The raw force of a single individual whom one has reared oneself from the raw is worth more than ten Lassallean turncoats, who always bring the seeds of their false tendencies into the Party with them. And if one could only get the masses without their *local leaders* it would still be all right. But one always has to take a whole crowd of these leaders into the bargain, who are bound by their previous public utterances, if not by their previous views, and now have above all things to prove that they have not deserted their principles but that on the contrary the Social-Democratic Workers' Party preaches *true* Lassalleanism. This was the unfortunate thing at Eisenach,<sup>1</sup> which could not be avoided at that time, perhaps, but there is no doubt at all that these elements have done

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<sup>1</sup> Engels refers to the Eisenach Congress of 1869, at which the Social-Democratic Workers' Party of Germany was officially organized.—*Ed.*

harm to the Party and I am not sure that the Party would not have been at least as strong today without that accession. In any case, however, I should regard it as a misfortune if these elements were to receive reinforcements.

One must not allow oneself to be misled by the cry for "unity." Those who have this word most often on their lips are those who sow the most dissension, just as at present the Jura Bakunists in Switzerland, who have provoked all the splits, clamour for nothing so much as for unity. These unity fanatics are either people of limited intelligence who want to stir everything into one nondescript brew, which, the moment it is left to settle, throws up the differences again but in much sharper contrast because they will then be all in one pot (you have a fine example of this in Germany with the people who preach reconciliation of the workers and the petty bourgeoisie)—or else they are people who unconsciously (like Mühlberger, for instance) or consciously want to adulterate the movement. For this reason the greatest sectarians and the biggest brawlers and rogues at certain moments vociferate loudest for unity. Nobody in our lifetime has given us more trouble and been more treacherous than the shouters for unity.

Naturally every party leadership wants to see successes, and this is quite a good thing. But there are circumstances in which one must have the courage to sacrifice *momentary* success for more important things. Especially for a party like ours, whose ultimate success is so absolutely certain, and which has developed so enormously in our own lifetime and before our own eyes, momentary success is by no means always and absolutely necessary. Take the International, for instance. After the Commune it had a colossal success. The bourgeois, struck all of a heap, ascribed omnipotence to it. The great mass of the membership believed things would stay like that for all eternity. We knew very well that the bubble *must* burst. All the riff-raff attached themselves to it. The sectarians within it began to flourish and misused the International in the hope that the meanest and most stupid actions would be permitted them. We did not allow that. Knowing well that the bubble must burst some time our concern was not to delay the catastrophe but to take care that the International emerged from it pure and unadulterated. The bubble burst at the Hague and you know that the majority of the Congress<sup>1</sup> members went home sick with disappointment. And yet nearly all these disappointed people, who imagined they would find the ideal of universal brotherhood and reconciliation in the

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<sup>1</sup> The reference is to the Hague Congress of the First International held on September 1-7, 1872.—Ed.



International, had far more bitter quarrels at home than those which broke out at the Hague! Now the sectarian quarrelmongers are preaching reconciliation and decrying us as being cantankerous and dictators! And if we had come out in a conciliatory way at the Hague, if we had hushed up the breaking out of the split—what would have been the result? The sectarians, especially the Bakunists, would have got another year in which to perpetrate, in the name of the International, even much greater stupidities and infamies; the workers of the most developed countries would have turned away in disgust; the bubble would not have burst but, pierced by pinpricks, would have slowly collapsed, and the next Congress, which would have been bound to bring the crisis anyhow, would have turned into the lowest kind of personal row, because *principles* would already have been sacrificed at the Hague. Then the International would indeed have gone to pieces—gone to pieces through “unity”! Instead of this we have now got rid of the rotten elements with honour to ourselves—the members of the Commune who were present at the last and decisive session say that no session of the Commune left such a terrible impression upon them as this session of the tribunal which passed judgment on the traitors to the European proletariat—for ten months we let them expend all their energies on lies, slander and intrigue—and where are they? They, the alleged representatives of the great majority of the International, now themselves announce that they do not dare to come to the next Congress. (More details in an article which is being sent off for the *Volksstaat* with this letter.) And if we had to do it again we should not, taking it all together, act any differently—tactical mistakes are always made, of course.

In any case I think the efficient elements among the Lassalleans will fall to you of themselves in course of time and that it would, therefore, be unwise to break off the fruit before it is ripe, as the unity crowd wants to.

Moreover, old man Hegel already said: A party proves itself the victorious party by the fact that it *splits* and can stand the split. The movement of the proletariat necessarily passes through different stages of development; at every stage part of the people get stuck and do not join in the further advance; and this alone explains why it is that actually the “solidarity of the proletariat” is everywhere being realized in different party groupings, which carry on life-and-death feuds with one another, as the Christian sects in the Roman Empire did amidst the worst persecutions.

You must also not forget that if the *Neuer Social-Demokrat* has more subscribers than the *Volksstaat*, this is due to the fact that each *sect* is necessarily fanatic and through this fanaticism obtains,

particularly in regions where it is new (as for instance the General Association of German Workers in Schleswig-Holstein), much greater momentary successes than the Party, which simply represents the real movement, without any sectarian vagaries. On the other hand, fanaticism does not last long.

I have to close my letter as the mail is about to leave. Let me only add hurriedly: Marx cannot tackle Lassalle until the French translation<sup>1</sup> is finished (approx. end of July), after which he will absolutely need a rest as he has greatly overworked himself. . . .

## ENGELS TO F. A. SORGE

London, September 12-17, 1874

. . . With your resignation the *old* International is entirely wound up and at an end. And that is well. It belonged to the period of the Second Empire, during which the oppression reigning throughout Europe prescribed unity and abstention from all internal polemics to the workers' movement, then just reawakening. It was the moment when the common, cosmopolitan interests of the proletariat could be put in the foreground. Germany, Spain, Italy and Denmark had only just come into the movement or were just coming into it. Actually in 1864 the theoretical character of the movement itself was still very confused everywhere in Europe, that is, among the masses. German Communism did not yet exist as a workers' party, Proudhonism was too weak to be able to trot out its particular hobbyhorses, Bakunin's new balderdash had not so much as come into being in his own head, and even the leaders of the English trades unions thought the program laid down in the preamble to the Rules gave them a basis for entering the movement. The first great success was bound to explode this naïve conjunction of all factions. This success was the Commune, which was without any doubt the child of the International intellectually, although the International did not lift a finger to produce it, and for which the International was quite properly held responsible. When, thanks to the Commune, the International had become a moral force in Europe, the row at once began. Every trend wanted to exploit the success for itself. Disintegration, which was inevitable, set in. Jealousy of the growing power of the only people who were really ready to work further along the lines of the old comprehensive program—the German

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<sup>1</sup> The reference is to the translation of volume I of *Capital* into French.—Ed.

Communists—drove the Belgian Proudhonists into the arms of the Bakunist adventurers. The Hague Congress was really the end—and for both parties. The only country where something could still be accomplished in the name of the International was America, and by a happy instinct the executive was transferred there. Now its prestige is exhausted there, too, and any further effort to galvanize it into new life would be folly and waste of energy. For ten years the International dominated one side of European history—the side on which the future lies—and can look back upon its work with pride. But in its old form it has outlived its usefulness. In order to produce a new International after the fashion of the old, an alliance of all the proletarian parties in every country, a general suppression of the workers' movement, like that which prevailed from 1849-64, would be necessary. For this the proletarian world has become too big, too extensive. I believe the next International—after Marx's writings have produced their effect for some years—will be directly Communist and will proclaim precisely our principles. . . .

## MARX AND ENGELS TO A. BEBEL, W. LIEBKNECHT, W. BRACKE AND OTHERS

(“CIRCULAR LETTER”)

London, September 17-18, 1879

. . . *The Manifesto of the Three Zurichers*

In the meantime Höchberg's *Jahrbuch* has reached us, containing an article, “The Socialist Movement in Germany in Retrospect,”<sup>1</sup> which, as Höchberg himself tells me, has been written by precisely the three members of the Zurich Commission. Here we have their authentic criticism of the movement up till now and with it their authentic program for the line of the new organ in so far as this depends on them.

Right at the beginning we read:

“The movement, which Lassalle regarded as an eminently political one, to which he summoned not only the workers but all honest democrats, *at the head of which* were to march the independent representatives of science and *all men imbued with true love*

<sup>1</sup> This article, written by Höchberg, Bernstein and Schramm, was printed in the social-reformist journal *Jahrbuch für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik* [Annual for Social Sciences and Social Policy].—Ed.

of humanity, was diminished under the presidency of Johann Baptist Schweitzer to a *one-sided struggle of the industrial workers in their own interests.*"

I shall not examine whether or how far this is historically accurate. The special reproach here levelled against Schweitzer is that he *diminished* Lassalleanism, which is here taken as a bourgeois-democratic-philanthropic movement, to a one-sided struggle in the interest of the industrial workers, by *deepening* its character as a class struggle of the industrial workers against the bourgeois. He is further reproached with having "rejected bourgeois democracy." What business has bourgeois democracy within the Social-Democratic Party anyway? If it consists of "honest men" it cannot wish for admission, and if it does nevertheless wish to be admitted this can only be in order to start a row.

The Lassallean party "chose to conduct itself *in the most one-sided way as a workers' party.*" The gentlemen who write that are themselves members of a party which conducts itself in the most one-sided way as a workers' party, they are at present invested with offices and dignities in this party. Here there is an absolute incompatibility. If they mean what they write they must leave the party, or at least resign their offices and dignities. If they do not do so, they admit that they are proposing to utilize their official position in order to combat the proletarian character of the Party. Thus, if the Party leaves them their offices and dignities it will be betraying itself.

In the opinion of these gentlemen, then, the Social-Democratic Party should *not* be a one-sided workers' party but an all-sided party of "all men imbued with true love of humanity." It must prove this above all by laying aside coarse proletarian passions and placing itself under the guidance of educated, philanthropic bourgeois "in order to cultivate good taste" and "learn good form" (p. 85). Then the "disreputable behaviour" of some of the leaders will give way to a thoroughly respectable "bourgeois behaviour." (As if the externally disreputable appearance of those here referred to were not the least they can be reproached with!) Then, too, "*numerous adherents* from the circles of the *educated* and *propertied* classes will make their appearance. But *these* must first be won if the ... agitation conducted is to attain *tangible successes.*" German Socialism has "attached too much importance to the winning of the *masses* and in so doing has neglected energetic (!) propaganda among the so-called upper strata of society." For "the Party still lacks men fit to represent it in the Reichstag." It is, however, "desirable and necessary to entrust the mandates to men who have the time and opportunity to make themselves thoroughly acquainted with the

relevant material. The simple worker and small master craftsman . . . have necessary leisure for this only in rare and exceptional cases." So elect bourgeois!

In short: the working class of itself is incapable of its own emancipation. For this purpose it must place itself under the leadership of "educated and propertied" bourgeois who alone possess the "time and opportunity" to acquaint themselves with what is good for the workers. And secondly, the bourgeoisie is on no account to be fought against but—to be *won over* by energetic propaganda.

But if one wants to win over the upper strata of society or only its well-disposed elements one must not frighten them on any account. And here the three Zurichers think they have made a reassuring discovery:

"Precisely at the present time, under the pressure of the Anti-Socialist Law, the Party is showing that it *is not inclined* to pursue the path of violent bloody revolution but is determined . . . to follow the path of legality, that is, of *reform*." So if the 500,000 to 600,000 social-democratic voters—between a tenth and an eighth of the whole electorate and, besides, dispersed over the length and breadth of the land—have the sense not to run their heads against a wall and to attempt a "bloody revolution" of one against ten, this proves that they forever *renounce* taking advantage of some tremendous external event, a sudden revolutionary upsurge arising from it or even a *victory* of the people gained in a conflict resulting from it. If Berlin should ever again be so uneducated as to have another March 18,<sup>1</sup> the Social-Democrats, instead of taking part in the fight as "riff-raff with a mania for barricades" (p. 88), must rather "follow the path of legality," put on the brakes, clear away the barricades and if necessary march with the glorious army against the one-sided, coarse, uneducated masses. Or if the gentlemen assert that this is not what they meant, what then did they mean?

But still better follows.

"Hence, the more quiet, objective and deliberate it (the Party) is in its criticism of existing conditions and in its proposals to change them, the less possible will it be to repeat the present successful move (when the Anti-Socialist Law was introduced) by which the conscious reactionaries intimidated the bourgeoisie by conjuring up the Red bogey" (p. 88).

In order to relieve the bourgeoisie of the last trace of anxiety it must be clearly and convincingly proved to it that the Red bogey is really only a bogey, and does not exist. But what is the secret of

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<sup>1</sup> This refers to the revolutionary barricade fighting in Berlin on March 18-19, 1848.—*Ed.*

the Red bogey if not the bourgeoisie's dread of the inevitable life-and-death struggle between it and the proletariat? Dread of the inevitable outcome of the modern class struggle? Do away with the class struggle and the bourgeoisie and "all independent people" will "not be afraid to go hand in hand with the proletarians"! And the ones to be cheated would be precisely the proletarians.

Let the Party, therefore, prove by its humble and lowly manner that it has once and for all laid aside the "improprieties and excesses" which occasioned the Anti-Socialist Law. If it voluntarily promises that it only intends to act within the limits of this law, Bismarck and the bourgeoisie will surely have the kindness to repeal it, as it will then be superfluous!

"Let no one misunderstand us"; we do not want "to give up our Party and our program, but think that for years hence we shall have enough to do if we concentrate our whole strength and energy upon the attainment of certain immediate aims which must in any case be achieved before the realization of the more far-reaching aspirations can be thought of." Then those bourgeois, petty-bourgeois and workers who are "at present frightened away . . . by our far-reaching demands" will join us in masses.

The program is not to be *given up* but only *postponed*—for an indefinite period. One accepts it, though not really for oneself and one's own lifetime but posthumously, as an heirloom to be handed down to one's children and grandchildren. In the meantime one devotes one's "whole strength and energy" to all sorts of petty rubbish and the patching up of the capitalist order of society in order at least to produce the appearance of something happening without at the same time scaring the bourgeoisie. There I must really praise the "Communist" Miquel, who proves his unshakable belief in the inevitable overthrow of capitalist society in the course of the next few hundred years by swindling for all he's worth, contributing his honest best to the crash of 1873<sup>1</sup> and so *really* doing something to help along the collapse of the existing order.

Another offence against good form was the "exaggerated attacks on the company promoters," who were after all "only children of their time"; it would therefore "have been better to abstain . . . from abusing Strousberg and similar people." Unfortunately everyone is only a "child of his time" and if this is a sufficient excuse nobody ought ever to be attacked any more, all controversy, all struggle on our part ceases; we quietly accept all the kicks our adversaries

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<sup>1</sup> The crash of 1873 ended the so-called "Gründertäumel" (the promoting frenzy), a period of furious speculation and stock-exchange gambling which followed on the termination of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71.—Ed.

give us because we, who are so wise, know that these adversaries are "only children of their time" and cannot act otherwise. Instead of repaying their kicks with interest we ought rather to pity these unfortunates.

Then again the support of the Commune had the disadvantage, nevertheless, that "people who were otherwise well disposed to us were alienated and in general the *hatred of the bourgeoisie* against us was increased." Furthermore, the party "is not wholly without blame for the passage of the October Law,<sup>1</sup> for it had increased the *hatred of the bourgeoisie* unnecessarily."

There you have the program of the three censors of Zurich. In clarity it leaves nothing to be desired. Least of all to us, who are very familiar with the whole of this phraseology from the 1848 days. It is the representatives of the petty bourgeoisie who are here presenting themselves, full of anxiety that the proletariat, under the pressure of its revolutionary position, may "go too far." Instead of determined political opposition, general mediation; instead of struggle against the government and the bourgeoisie, an attempt to win over and persuade them; instead of defiant resistance to ill treatment from above, humble submission and confession that the punishment was deserved. Historically necessary conflicts are all interpreted as misunderstandings, and all discussion ends with the assurance that after all we are all agreed on the main point. The people who came out as bourgeois democrats in 1848 could just as well call themselves social-democrats now. To the former the democratic republic was as unattainably remote as the overthrow of the capitalist system is to the latter, and therefore is of absolutely no importance in present-day politics; one can mediate, compromise and philanthropize to one's heart's content. It is just the same with the class struggle between proletariat and bourgeoisie. It is recognized on paper because its existence can no longer be denied, but in practice it is hushed up, diluted, attenuated. The Social-Democratic Party is *not* to be a workers' party, is not to incur the odium of the bourgeoisie or of anyone else; it should above all conduct energetic propaganda among the bourgeoisie; instead of laying stress on far-reaching aims which frighten away the bourgeoisie and after all are not attainable in our generation, it should rather devote its whole strength and energy to those petty-bourgeois patchwork reforms which, by providing the old order of society with new props, may perhaps transform the ultimate catastrophe into a gradual, piecemeal and as far as possible peaceful process of dissolution. These are the same

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<sup>1</sup> The reference is to the Exceptional Law against the Socialists, introduced by Bismarck in October 1878.—Ed.

people who, ostensibly engaged in indefatigable activity, not only do nothing themselves but try to prevent anything happening at all except—chatter; the same people whose fear of every form of action in 1848 and 1849 obstructed the movement at every step and finally brought about its downfall, the same people who never see reaction and are then quite astonished to find themselves in the end in a blind alley where neither resistance nor flight is possible, the same people who want to confine history within their narrow philistine horizon and over whose heads history invariably proceeds to the order of the day.

As to their socialist convictions, this has been adequately criticized already in the *Manifesto*, the chapter on "German, or 'True,' Socialism."<sup>1</sup> Where the class struggle is pushed aside as a disagreeable "coarse" phenomenon, nothing remains as a basis for Socialism but "true love of humanity" and empty phraseology about "justice."

It is an inevitable phenomenon, rooted in the course of development, that people from what have hitherto been the ruling classes should also join the militant proletariat and supply it with educative elements. We clearly stated this in the *Manifesto*. But here two points are to be noted:

*First*, in order to be of use to the proletarian movement these people must bring real educative elements into it. But with the great majority of the German bourgeois converts that is not the case. Neither the *Zukunft* nor the *Neue Gesellschaft*<sup>2</sup> have contributed anything which could advance the movement one step further. Here there is an absolute lack of real educational material, whether factual or theoretical. In its place there are attempts to bring superficially mastered socialist ideas into harmony with the exceedingly varied theoretical standpoints which these gentlemen have brought with them from the university or elsewhere and of which, owing to the process of decomposition which the remnants of German philosophy are at present undergoing, one is more confused than the other. Instead of thoroughly studying the new science themselves to begin with, each of them preferred to trim it to fit the point of view he already had brought along, made himself forthwith a private science of his own and at once came forward with the pretension of wanting to teach it. Hence, there are about as many points of view among these gentry as there are heads; instead of producing clarity in a single case they have only produced desperate confu-

<sup>1</sup> See K. Marx and F. Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Moscow 1949 p. 84-88.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> *Zukunft* [Future] and *Neue Gesellschaft* [New Society]: Social-reformist journals. The former appeared in Zurich in 1877-80; the latter in Berlin in 1877-78.—Ed.



sion—fortunately almost exclusively among themselves. Educative elements whose first principle is to teach what they have not learnt can very well be dispensed with by the Party.

*Secondly.* If people of this kind from other classes join the proletarian movement, the first condition must be that they should not bring any remnants of bourgeois, petty-bourgeois, etc., prejudices with them but should whole-heartedly adopt the proletarian outlook. But these gentlemen, as has been proved, are chuck-full of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideas. In such a petty-bourgeois country as Germany these ideas certainly have their justification. But only *outside* the Social-Democratic Workers' Party. If these gentlemen constitute themselves into a social-democratic petty-bourgeois party they have a perfect right to do so; one could then negotiate with them, form a *bloc* according to circumstances, etc. But in a workers' party they are an adulterating element. If reasons exist for tolerating them there for the moment it is also a duty *only* to tolerate them, to allow them no influence in the Party leadership and to remain aware that a break with them is only a matter of time. That time, moreover, seems to have come. How the Party can tolerate the authors of this article in its midst any longer is incomprehensible to us. But if even the leadership of the Party should fall more or less into the hands of such people, the Party would simply be castrated and there would be an end of proletarian snap.

As for ourselves, in view of our whole past there is only one path open to us. For almost forty years we have stressed the class struggle as the immediate driving power of history and in particular the class struggle between bourgeoisie and proletariat as the great lever of the modern social revolution; it is, therefore, impossible for us to cooperate with people who wish to expunge this class struggle from the movement. When the International was formed we expressly formulated the battle cry: The emancipation of the working class must be the work of the working class itself. We cannot, therefore, cooperate with people who openly state that the workers are too uneducated to emancipate themselves and must first be freed from above by philanthropic big bourgeois and petty bourgeois. If the new Party organ adopts a line corresponding to the views of these gentlemen, is bourgeois and not proletarian, then nothing remains for us, much though we should regret it, but publicly to declare our opposition to it, and to dissolve the solidarity with which we have hitherto represented the German Party abroad. But it is to be hoped that things will not come to *that* pass. . . .

## ENGELS TO C. SCHMIDT

London, August 5, 1890

... I saw a review of Paul Barth's book<sup>1</sup> by that bird of ill omen, Moritz Wirth, in the Vienna *Deutsche Worte*, and *this* criticism left on my mind an unfavourable impression of the book itself, as well. I will have a look at it, but I must say that if "little Moritz" is right when he quotes Barth as stating that the sole example of the dependence of philosophy, etc., on the material conditions of existence which he can find in all Marx's works is that Descartes declares animals to be machines, then I am sorry for the man who can write such a thing. And if this man has not discovered yet that while the material mode of existence is the *primum agens*<sup>2</sup> this does not preclude the ideological spheres from reacting upon it in their turn, though with a secondary effect, he cannot possibly have understood the subject he is writing about. However, as I have said, all this is secondhand and little Moritz is a dangerous friend. The materialist conception of history has a lot of them nowadays, to whom it serves as an excuse for *not* studying history. Just as Marx used to say about the French "Marxists" of the late seventies: "All I know is that I am not a Marxist."

There has also been a discussion in the *Volks-Tribüne* about the distribution of products in the future society, whether this will take place according to the amount of work done or otherwise. The question has been approached very "materialistically," in opposition to certain idealistic phraseology about justice. But strangely enough it has not struck anyone that, after all, the method of distribution essentially depends on *how much* there is to distribute, and that this must surely change with the progress of production and social organization, so that the method of distribution may also change, presumably. But to everyone who took part in the discussion, "socialist society" appeared not as something undergoing continuous change and progress but as a stable affair fixed once for all, which must, therefore, have a method of distribution fixed once for all. All one can reasonably do, however, is 1) to try and discover the method of distribution to be used *at the beginning*, and 2) to try and find the *general tendency* along which the further development will

<sup>1</sup> The book referred to is Paul Barth, *Die Geschichtsphilosophie Hegels und der Hegelianer bis auf Marx und Hartmann* [*The Philosophy of History of Hegel and the Hegelians up to Marx and Hartmann*].—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> Primary agent, prime cause.—Ed.

proceed. But about this I do not find a single word in the whole debate.

In general the word "materialistic" serves many of the younger writers in Germany as a mere phrase with which anything and everything is labelled without further study, that is, they stick on this label and then think the question disposed of. But our conception of history is above all a guide to study, not a lever for construction *à la* Hegelianism. All history must be studied afresh, the conditions of existence of the different formations of society must be examined in detail before the attempt is made to deduce from them the political, civil-legal, esthetic, philosophic, religious, etc., notions corresponding to them. Up to now but little has been done here because only a few people have got down to it seriously. In this field we can utilize heaps of help, it is immensely big, and anyone who will work seriously can achieve much and distinguish himself. But instead of this only too many of the younger Germans simply make use of the phrase of historical materialism (and *everything* can be turned into a phrase) only in order to get their own relatively scanty historical knowledge—for economic history is still in its swaddling clothes—constructed into a neat system as quickly as possible, and they then think themselves something very tremendous. And after that a Barth can come along and attack the thing itself, which in his circle has indeed been degraded to a mere phrase.

However, all this will right itself. We are strong enough in Germany now to stand a lot. One of the greatest services which the Anti-Socialist Law did us was to free us from the officiousness of the German student who had got tinged with Socialism. We are now strong enough to digest the German student too, who is giving himself great airs again. You, who have really done something, must have noticed yourself how few of the young literary men who fasten themselves on to the Party give themselves the trouble to study economics, the history of economics, the history of trade, of industry, of agriculture, of the formations of society. How many know anything of Maurer except his name! The impudence of the journalist must serve for everything here and the result looks like it. It often seems as if these gentlemen think anything is good enough for the workers. If these gentlemen only knew how Marx thought his best things were still not good enough for the workers, how he regarded it as a crime to offer the workers anything but the very best! . . .

## ENGELS TO J. BLOCH

London, September 21-22, 1890

... According to the materialist conception of history, the *ultimately* determining element in history is the production and reproduction of real life. More than this neither Marx nor I have ever asserted. Hence if somebody twists this into saying that the economic element is the *only* determining one, he transforms that proposition into a meaningless, abstract, senseless phrase. The economic situation is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure: political forms of the class struggle and its results, to wit: constitutions established by the victorious class after a successful battle, etc., juridical forms, and then even the reflexes of all these actual struggles in the brains of the participants, political, juristic, philosophical theories, religious views and their further development into systems of dogmas, also exercise their influence upon the course of the historical struggles and in many cases preponderate in determining their *form*. There is an interaction of all these elements in which, amid all the endless host of accidents (that is, of things and events, whose inner connection is so remote or so impossible of proof that we can regard it as nonexistent, as negligible) the economic movement finally asserts itself as necessary. Otherwise the application of the theory to any period of history one chose would be easier than the solution of a simple equation of the first degree.

We make our history ourselves, but, in the first place, under very definite assumptions and conditions. Among these the economic ones are ultimately decisive. But the political ones, etc., and indeed even the traditions which haunt human minds also play a part, although not the decisive one. The Prussian state also arose and developed from historical, ultimately economic causes. But it could scarcely be maintained without pedantry that among the many small states of North Germany, Brandenburg was specifically determined by economic necessity to become the great power embodying the economic, linguistic and, after the Reformation, also the religious difference between North and South, and not by other elements as well (above all by its entanglement with Poland, owing to the possession of Prussia, and hence with international political relations—which were indeed also decisive in the formation of the Austrian dynastic power). Without making oneself ridiculous it would be a difficult thing to explain in terms of economics the existence of every small state in Germany, past and present, or the origin of the High German consonant permutations, which the geographical wall of partition formed by the mountains from the Sudetic range to the Taunus widened to form a regular fissure across all Germany.

In the second place, however, history is made in such a way that the final result always arises from conflicts between many individual wills, of which each again has been made what it is by a host of particular conditions of life. Thus there are innumerable intersecting forces, an infinite series of parallelograms of forces which give rise to one resultant—the historical event. This may again itself be viewed as the product of a power which works as a whole, *unconsciously* and without volition. For what each individual wills is obstructed by everyone else, and what emerges is something that no one willed. Thus past history proceeds in the manner of a natural process and is essentially subject to the same laws of motion. But from the fact that individual wills—of which each desires what he is impelled to by his physical constitution and external, in the last resort economic, circumstances (either his own personal circumstances or those of society in general)—do not attain what they want, but are merged into a collective mean, a common resultant, it must not be concluded that their value is equal to zero. On the contrary, each contributes to the resultant and is to this degree involved in it.

I would furthermore ask you to study this theory from its original sources and not at secondhand; it is really much easier. Marx hardly wrote anything in which it did not play a part. But especially *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*<sup>1</sup> is a most excellent example of its application. There are also many allusions in *Capital*. Then may I also direct you to my writings: *Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science* and *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*,<sup>2</sup> in which I have given the most detailed account of historical materialism which, as far as I know, exists.

Marx and I are ourselves partly to blame for the fact that the younger people sometimes lay more stress on the economic side than is due to it. We had to emphasize the main principle *vis-à-vis* our adversaries, who denied it, and we had not always the time, the place or the opportunity to allow the other elements involved in the interaction to come into their rights. But when it was a case of presenting a section of history, that is, of a practical application, it was a different matter and there no error was possible. Unfortunately, however, it happens only too often that people think they have fully understood a new theory and can apply it without more ado from the moment they have mastered its main principles, and even those not always correctly. And I cannot exempt many of the more recent "Marxists" from this reproach, for the most amazing rubbish has been produced in this quarter, too.

<sup>1</sup> See K. Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, Moscow 1948.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 324-64 of this volume.—Ed.

## ENGELS TO C. SCHMIDT

London, October 27, 1890

I am taking advantage of the first free moments to reply to you. I think you would do very well to take the post in Zurich. You could always learn a good deal about economics there, especially if you bear in mind that Zurich is after all only a third-rate money and speculation market, so that the impressions which make themselves felt there are weakened by twofold or threefold reflection or are deliberately distorted. But you will get a practical knowledge of the mechanism and be obliged to follow the stock-exchange reports from London, New York, Paris, Berlin and Vienna at first hand, and thus the world market, in its reflex as money and stock market, will reveal itself to you. Economic, political and other reflections are just like those in the human eye: they pass through a condensing lens and therefore appear upside down, standing on their heads. Only the nervous apparatus which would put them on their feet again for representation is lacking. The money market man sees the movement of industry and of the world market only in the inverted reflection of the money and stock market and so effect becomes cause to him. I noticed that already in the forties in Manchester: the London stock-exchange reports were utterly useless for understanding the course of industry and its periodical maxima and minima because these gentry tried to explain everything from crises on the money market, which of course were generally only symptoms. At that time the point was to disprove temporary overproduction as the origin of industrial crises, so that the thing had in addition its tendentious side, provocative of distortion. This point now ceases to exist—for us, at any rate, for good and all—added to which it is indeed a fact that the money market can also have its own crises, in which direct disturbances of industry play only a subordinate part or no part at all. Here there is still much, especially in the history of the last twenty years, to be established and examined.

Where there is division of labour on a social scale there the different labour processes become independent of each other. In the last instance production is the decisive factor. But as soon as trade in products becomes independent of production proper, it follows a movement of its own, which, while it is governed as a whole by production, still in particular respects and within this general dependence follows laws of its own contained in the nature of this new factor; this movement has phases of its own and in its turn reacts on the movement of production. The discovery of America was due to the thirst for gold which had previously driven the Portuguese to Africa (compare Soetbeer's *Production of Precious Metals*), because the enor-

mously extended European industry of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and the trade corresponding to it demanded more means of exchange than Germany, the great silver country from 1450 to 1550, could provide. The conquest of India by the Portuguese, Dutch and English between 1500 and 1800 had *imports from India* as its object—nobody dreamt of exporting anything there. And yet what a colossal reaction these discoveries and conquests, solely conditioned by the interests of trade, had upon industry: it was only the need for *exports to* these countries that created and developed large-scale industry.

So it is, too, with the money market. As soon as trade in money becomes separate from trade in commodities it has—under certain conditions imposed by production and commodity trade and within these limits—a development of its own, special laws determined by its own nature and separate phases. If to this is added that money trade, developing further, comes to include trade in securities and that these securities are not only government paper but also industrial and transport stocks, so that money trade conquers the direct control over a portion of the production by which, taken as a whole, it is itself controlled, then the reaction of money trading on production becomes still stronger and more complicated. The traders in money are the owners of railways, mines, iron works, etc. These means of production take on a double aspect: their operation has to be directed sometimes in the interests of direct production but sometimes also according to the requirements of the shareholders, so far as they are money traders. The most striking example of this is the North American railways, whose operation is entirely dependent on the daily stock-exchange operations of a Jay Gould or a Vanderbilt, etc., these having nothing whatever to do with the particular railway concerned and its interests as a means of communication. And even here in England we have seen contests lasting for tens of years between different railway companies over the boundaries of their respective territories—contests in which an enormous amount of money was thrown away, not in the interests of production and communication but simply because of a rivalry which usually only had the object of facilitating the stock-exchange dealings of the shareholding money traders.

With these few indications of my conception of the relation of production to commodity trade and of both to money trading, I have answered, in essence, your questions about historical materialism generally. The thing is easiest to grasp from the point of view of the division of labour. Society gives rise to certain common functions which it cannot dispense with. The persons appointed for this purpose form a new branch of the division of labour *within society*.

This gives them particular interests, distinct, too, from the interests of those who empowered them; they make themselves independent of the latter and—the state is in being. And now things proceed in a way similar to that in commodity trade and later in money trade: the new independent power, while having in the main to follow the movement of production, reacts, by virtue of its inherent relative independence, that is, the relative independence once transferred to it and gradually further developed, in its turn upon the conditions and course of production. It is the interaction of two unequal forces: on the one hand, the economic movement, on the other, the new political power, which strives for as much independence as possible, and which, having once been established, is endowed with a movement of its own. On the whole, the economic movement gets its way, but it has also to suffer reactions from the political movement which it itself established and endowed with relative independence, from the movement of the state power, on the one hand, and of the opposition simultaneously engendered, on the other. Just as the movement of the industrial market is, in the main and with the reservations already indicated, reflected in the money market and, of course, in *inverted* form, so the struggle between the classes already existing and already in conflict with one another is reflected in the struggle between government and opposition, but also in inverted form, no longer directly but indirectly, not as a class struggle but as a fight for political principles, and so distorted that it has taken us thousands of years to get behind it.

The reaction of the state power upon economic development can be one of three kinds: it can run in the same direction, and then development is more rapid; it can oppose the line of development, in which case nowadays state power in every great people will go to pieces in the long run; or it can cut off the economic development from certain paths, and prescribe certain others. This case ultimately reduces itself to one of the two previous ones. But it is obvious that in cases two and three the political power can do great damage to the economic development and result in the squandering of great masses of energy and material.

Then there is also the case of the conquest and brutal destruction of economic resources, by which, in certain circumstances, a whole local or national economic development could formerly be ruined. Nowadays such a case usually has the opposite effect, at least among great peoples: in the long run the vanquished often gains more economically, politically and morally than the victor.

Similarly with law. As soon as the new division of labour which creates professional lawyers becomes necessary, another new and independent sphere is opened up which, for all its general depend-



ence on production and trade, still has also a special capacity for reacting upon these spheres. In a modern state, law must not only correspond to the general economic condition and be its expression, but must also be an *internally coherent* expression which does not, owing to inner contradictions, reduce itself to nought. And in order to achieve this, the faithful reflection of economic conditions suffers increasingly. All the more so the more rarely it happens that a code of law is the blunt, unmitigated, unadulterated expression of the domination of a class—this in itself would offend the “conception of right.” Even in the *Code Napoléon* the pure, consistent conception of right held by the revolutionary bourgeoisie of 1792-96 is already adulterated in many ways, and, in so far as it is embodied there, has daily to undergo all sorts of attenuations owing to the rising power of the proletariat. Which does not prevent the *Code Napoléon* from being the statute book which serves as a basis for every new code of law in every part of the world. Thus to a great extent the course of the “development of right” only consists, first, in the attempt to do away with the contradictions arising from the direct translation of economic relations into legal principles, and to establish a harmonious system of law, and then in the repeated breaches made in this system by the influence and pressure of further economic development, which involves it in further contradictions. (I am speaking here only of civil law for the moment.)

The reflection of economic relations as legal principles is necessarily also a topsy-turvy one: it goes on without the person who is acting being conscious of it; the jurist imagines he is operating with *a priori* propositions, whereas they are really only economic reflexes; so everything is upside down. And it seems to me obvious that this inversion, which, so long as it remains unrecognized, forms what we call *ideological conception*, reacts in its turn upon the economic basis and may, within certain limits, modify it. The basis of the law of inheritance—assuming that the stages reached in the development of the family are equal—is an economic one. Nevertheless, it would be difficult to prove, for instance, that the absolute liberty of the testator in England and the severe restrictions imposed upon him in France are only due in every detail to economic causes. Both react back, however, on the economic sphere to a very considerable extent, because they influence the distribution of property.

As to the realms of ideology which soar still higher in the air, religion, philosophy, etc., these have a prehistoric stock, found already in existence by, and taken over in, the historic period, of what we should today call bunk. These various false conceptions of nature, of man's own being, of spirits, magic forces, etc., have for the most

part only a negative economic basis; the low economic development of the prehistoric period is supplemented and also partially conditioned and even caused by the false conceptions of nature. And even though economic necessity was the main driving force of the progressive knowledge of nature and becomes ever more so, it would surely be pedantic to try and find economic causes for all this primitive nonsense. The history of science is the history of the gradual clearing away of this nonsense or of its replacement by fresh but always less absurd nonsense. The people who attend to this belong in their turn to special spheres in the division of labour and appear to themselves to be working in an independent field. And to the extent that they form an independent group within the social division of labour, their productions, including their errors, react back as an influence upon the whole development of society, even on its economic development. But all the same they themselves are again under the dominating influence of economic development. In philosophy, for instance, this can be most readily proved for the bourgeois period. Hobbes was the first modern materialist (in the eighteenth century sense) but he was an absolutist in a period when absolute monarchy was at its height throughout the whole of Europe and when the fight of absolute monarchy versus the people was beginning in England! Locke, both in religion and politics, was the child of the class compromise of 1688. The English deists and their more consistent continuators, the French materialists, were the true philosophers of the bourgeoisie, the French even of the bourgeois revolution. The German philistine runs through German philosophy from Kant to Hegel, sometimes positively and sometimes negatively. But the philosophy of every epoch, since it is a definite sphere in the division of labour, has as its presupposition certain definite thought material handed down to it by its predecessors, from which it takes its start. And that is why economically backward countries can still play first fiddle in philosophy: France in the eighteenth century compared with England, on whose philosophy the French based themselves, and later Germany relatively to both. But in France as well as Germany philosophy and the general blossoming of literature at that time were the result of a rising economic development. I consider the ultimate supremacy of economic development established in these spheres too, but it comes to pass within the conditions imposed by the particular sphere itself: in philosophy, for instance, through the operation of economic influences (which again generally act only under political, etc., disguises) upon the existing philosophic material handed down by predecessors. Here economy creates nothing anew, but it determines the way in which the thought material found in existence is altered and further developed, and that too for the

most part indirectly, for it is the political, legal and moral reflexes which exercise the greatest direct influence upon philosophy.

About religion I have said what was most necessary in the last section on Feuerbach.

If therefore Barth supposes that we deny any and every reaction of the political, etc., reflexes of the economic movement upon the movement itself, he is simply tilting at windmills. He has only got to look at Marx's *Eighteenth Brumaire*, which deals almost exclusively with the *particular* part played by political struggles and events; of course, within their *general* dependence upon economic conditions. Or *Capital*, the section on the working day, for instance, where legislation, which is surely a political act, has such a trenchant effect. Or the section on the history of the bourgeoisie. (Chapter XXIV.) Or why do we fight for the political dictatorship of the proletariat if political power is economically impotent? Force (that is, state power) is also an economic power!

But I have no time to criticize the book now. I must first get volume III<sup>1</sup> out and besides I think that Bernstein, for instance, could deal with it quite effectively.

What these gentlemen all lack is dialectics. They always see only here cause, there effect. That this is a hollow abstraction, that such metaphysical polar opposites exist in the real world only during crises, while the whole vast process goes on in the form of interaction—though of very unequal forces, the economic movement being by far the strongest, most primeval, most decisive—that here everything is relative and nothing absolute—this they never begin to see. Hegel has never existed for them.

## ENGELS TO F. MEHRING

London, July 14, 1893

Today is my first opportunity to thank you for the *Lessing Legend* you were kind enough to send me. I did not want to reply with a bare formal acknowledgement of receipt of the book but intended at the same time to tell you something about it, about its contents. Hence the delay.

I shall begin at the end—the appendix on historical materialism,<sup>2</sup> in which you have lined up the main things excellently and

<sup>1</sup> Volume III of Marx's *Capital* is meant.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> Mehring's article "*Über den historischen Materialismus*" ["On Historical Materialism"] was printed in 1893 as an appendix to his book *Die Lessing Legende* [*The Lessing Legend*].—Ed.

for any unprejudiced person convincingly. If I find anything to object to it is that you give me more credit than I deserve, even if I count in everything which I might possibly have found out for myself—in time—but which Marx with his more rapid *coup d'œil*<sup>1</sup> and wider vision discovered much more quickly. When one has the good fortune to work for forty years with a man like Marx, one does not usually get the recognition one thinks one deserves during his lifetime. Then, if the greater man dies, the lesser easily gets overrated and this seems to me to be just my case at present; history will set all this right in the end and by that time one will have quietly turned up one's toes and not know anything any more about anything.

Otherwise there is only one point lacking, which, however, Marx and I always failed to stress enough in our writings and in regard to which we are all equally guilty. That is to say, we all laid, and *were bound* to lay, the main emphasis, in the first place, on the *derivation* of political, juridical and other ideological notions, and of actions arising through the medium of these notions, from basic economic facts. But in so doing we neglected the formal side—the ways and means by which these notions, etc., come about—for the sake of the content. This has given our adversaries a welcome opportunity for misunderstandings and distortions, of which Paul Barth is a striking example.

Ideology is a process accomplished by the so-called thinker consciously, it is true, but with a false consciousness. The real motive forces impelling him remain unknown to him; otherwise it simply would not be an ideological process. Hence he imagines false or seeming motive forces. Because it is a process of thought he derives its form as well as its content from pure thought, either his own or that of his predecessors. He works with mere thought material, which he accepts without examination as the product of thought, and does not investigate further for a more remote source independent of thought; indeed this is a matter of course to him, because, as all action is *mediated* by thought, it appears to him to be ultimately *based* upon thought.

The ideologist who deals with history (history is here simply meant to comprise all the spheres—political, juridical, philosophical, theological—belonging to *society* and not only to nature) thus possesses in every sphere of science material which has formed itself independently out of the thought of previous generations and has gone through its own independent process of development in the brains of these successive generations. True, external facts belonging to one or another sphere may have exercised a codetermining influence

<sup>1</sup> Grasp.—Ed.

on this development, but the tacit presupposition is that these facts themselves are also only the fruits of a process of thought, and so we still remain within that realm of mere thought, which apparently has successfully digested even the hardest facts.

It is above all this appearance of an independent history of state constitutions, of systems of law, of ideological conceptions in every separate domain that dazzles most people. If Luther and Calvin "overcome" the official Catholic religion or Hegel "overcomes" Fichte and Kant or Rousseau with his republican *contrat social*, indirectly overcomes the constitutional Montesquieu, this is a process which remains within theology, philosophy or political science, represents a stage in the history of these particular spheres of thought and never passes beyond the sphere of thought. And since the bourgeois illusion of the eternity and finality of capitalist production has been added as well, even the overcoming of the mercantilists by the physiocrats and Adam Smith is accounted as a sheer victory of thought; not as the reflection in thought of changed economic facts but as the finally achieved correct understanding of actual conditions subsisting always and everywhere—in fact, if Richard Coeur de Lion and Philip Augustus had introduced free trade instead of getting mixed up in the crusades we should have been spared five hundred years of misery and stupidity.

This aspect of the matter, which I can only indicate here, we have all, I think, neglected more than it deserves. It is the old story: form is always neglected at first for content. As I say, I have done that too and the mistake has always struck me only later. So I am not only far from reproaching you with this in any way—as the older of the guilty parties I certainly have no right to do so; on the contrary. But I would like all the same to draw your attention to this point for the future.

Hanging together with this is the fatuous notion of the ideologists that because we deny an independent historical development to the various ideological spheres which play a part in history we also deny them any *effect upon history*. The basis of this is the common undialectical conception of cause and effect as rigidly opposite poles, the total disregarding of interaction. These gentlemen often almost deliberately forget that once a historic element has been brought into the world by other, ultimately economic causes, it reacts, can react on its environment and even on the causes that have given rise to it. For instance, Barth on the priesthood and religion, on your page 475. I was very glad to see how you settled this fellow whose banality exceeds all expectations; and him they make professor of history in Leipzig! I must say that old man

Wachsmuth—also rather a bonehead but greatly appreciative of facts—was quite a different chap.

As for the rest, I can only repeat about the book what I repeatedly said about the articles when they appeared in the *Neue Zeit*: it is by far the best presentation in existence of the genesis of the Prussian state. Indeed I may well say that it is the only good presentation, correctly developing in most matters their interconnection down to the veriest details. One regrets only that you were unable to include the entire further development down to Bismarck and one hopes involuntarily that you will do this another time and present a complete coherent picture, from the Elector Frederick William down to old William. You have already made your preliminary investigations and, in the main at least, they are as good as finished. The thing has to be done sometime anyhow before the shaky old shanty comes tumbling down. The dissipation of the monarchical-patriotic legends, while not directly a necessary precondition for the abolition of the monarchy which screens class domination (inasmuch as a *pure*, bourgeois republic in Germany will be outstripped by events before it will have come into existence) will nevertheless be one of the most effective levers for that purpose.

Then you will have more space and opportunity to depict the local history of Prussia as part of the general misery that Germany has gone through. This is the point where I depart somewhat here and there from your view, especially in the conception of the preconditions for the dismemberment of Germany and of the failure of the bourgeois revolution in Germany during the sixteenth century. When I get down to reworking the historical introduction to my *Peasant War*, which I hope will be next winter, I shall be able to develop there the points in question. Not that I consider those you indicated incorrect, but I put others alongside of them and group them somewhat differently.

In studying German history—the story of a continuous state of wretchedness—I have always found that only a comparison with the corresponding French periods produces a correct sense of proportion, because what happens there is the direct opposite of what happens in our country. There, the establishment of a national state from the scattered parts of the feudal state precisely at the time we pass through the period of our greatest decline. There, a rare objective logic during the whole course of the process; with us, more and more dismal dislocation. There, during the Middle Ages, foreign intervention is represented by the English conqueror who intervenes in favour of the Provençal nationality against the Northern French nationality. The wars with England represent, in a way, the Thirty Years' War, which, however, ends in the ejection

of the foreign invaders and the subjugation of the South by the North. Then comes the struggle between the central power and vassal Burgundy supported by its foreign possessions, which plays the part of Brandenburg-Prussia, a struggle which ends, however, in the victory of the central power and conclusively establishes the national state. And precisely at that moment the national state completely collapses in our country (in so far as the "German kingdom" within the Holy Roman Empire can be called a national state) and the plundering of German territory on a large scale sets in. This comparison is most humiliating for Germans but for that very reason the more instructive; and since our workers have put Germany back in the forefront of the historical movement it has become somewhat easier for us to swallow the ignominy of the past.

Another especially significant feature of the development of Germany is the fact that neither of the partial states which in the end partitioned Germany between them was purely German—both were colonies on conquered Slav territory: Austria a Bavarian and Brandenburg a Saxon colony—and that they acquired power *within* Germany only by relying upon the support of foreign, non-German possessions: Austria upon that of Hungary (not to mention Bohemia) and Brandenburg that of Prussia. On the Western border, the one in greatest jeopardy, nothing of the kind took place; on the Northern border it was left to the Danes to protect Germany against the Danes; and in the South there was so little to protect that the frontier guard, the Swiss, even succeeded in tearing themselves loose from Germany!

But I have allowed myself to drift into all kinds of extraneous matter. Let this palaver at least serve you as proof of how stimulating an effect your work has upon me. . . .

## ENGELS TO N. F. DANIELSON

London, October 17, 1893

. . . Many thanks for the copies of the *Очерки* [*Sketches*],<sup>1</sup> three of which I have forwarded to appreciative friends. The book, I am glad to see, has caused considerable stir and indeed sensation, as it well merited. Among the Russians I have met, it was the chief subject of conversation. Only yesterday one of them writes: у нас на Руси идет спор о "судьбах капитализма в России."<sup>2</sup> In the Berlin

<sup>1</sup> Николай-он: *Очерки нашего пореформенного общественного хозяйства*, С. Петербург 1893.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> Here in Russia a controversy is going on about "the fate of capitalism in Russia."

*Sozialpolitisches Centralblatt*<sup>1</sup> a Mr. P. B. Struve has a long article on your book; I must agree with him in this one point, that for me, too, the present capitalistic phase of development in Russia appears an unavoidable consequence of the historical conditions as created by the Crimean war, the way in which the change of 1861 in agrarian conditions was accomplished, and the political stagnation in Europe generally. Where he is decidedly wrong is in comparing the present state of Russia with that of the United States in order to refute what he calls your pessimistic views of the future. He says, the evil consequences of modern capitalism in Russia will be as easily overcome as they are in the United States. There he quite forgets that the U. S. are modern, bourgeois, from the very origin; that they were founded by *petits bourgeois* and peasants who ran away from European feudalism in order to establish a purely bourgeois society. Whereas in Russia, we have a groundwork of a primitive communistic character, a pre-civilization *Gentilgesellschaft*,<sup>2</sup> crumbling to ruins, it is true, but still serving as the groundwork, the material upon which the capitalistic revolution (for it is a real social revolution) acts and operates. In America, *Geldwirtschaft*<sup>3</sup> has been fully established for more than a century, in Russia, *Naturalwirtschaft*<sup>4</sup> was all but exclusively the rule. Therefore it stands to reason that the change, in Russia, must be far more violent, far more incisive, and accompanied by immensely greater sufferings than it can be in America.

But for all that it still seems to me that you take a gloomier view of the case than the facts justify. No doubt the passage from primitive agrarian communism to capitalistic industrialism cannot take place without terrible dislocation of society, without the disappearance of whole classes and their transformation into other classes; and what enormous suffering and waste of human lives and productive forces that necessarily implies, we have seen on a smaller scale—in Western Europe. But from that to the complete ruin of a great and highly gifted nation there is still a long way. The rapid increase of population to which you have been accustomed may be checked; the reckless deforestation combined with the expropriation of the *помещики*<sup>5</sup> as well as the peasants may cause a colossal waste of productive forces; but after all, a population of more than a hundred million will finally furnish a very considerable home market for a very respectable *grande industrie*, and with you, as elsewhere,

<sup>1</sup> Third year of the publication, No. 1, October 1, 1893. [Note by Engels.]

<sup>2</sup> Gentile society.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup> Money economy.—Ed.

<sup>4</sup> Natural economy.—Ed.

<sup>5</sup> Landlords.—Ed.



things will end by finding their own level—if capitalism lasts long enough in Western Europe.

You yourself admit that "the social conditions in Russia after the Crimean war were not favourable to the development of the form of production inherited by us from our past history." I would go further and say that no more in Russia than anywhere else would it have been possible to develop a higher social form out of primitive agrarian communism unless—that higher form was *already in existence* in another country, so as to serve as a model. That higher form being, wherever it is historically possible, the necessary consequence of the capitalistic form of production and of the social dualistic antagonism created by it, it could not be developed directly out of the agrarian commune, unless in imitation of an example already in existence somewhere else. Had the West of Europe been ripe, 1860-70, for such a transformation, had that transformation then been taken in hand in England, France, etc., then the Russians would have been called upon to show what could have been made out of their commune, which was then more or less intact. But the West remained stagnant, no such transformation was attempted, and capitalism was more and more rapidly developed. And as Russia had no choice but this: either to develop the commune into a form of production from which it was separated by a number of historical stages, and for which not even in the West the conditions were then ripe—evidently an impossible task—or else to develop into capitalism, what remained to her but the latter chance?

As to the commune, it is only possible so long as the differences of wealth among its members are but trifling. As soon as these differences become great, as soon as some of its members become the debt slaves of the richer members, it can no longer live. The кулаки and мироеды<sup>1</sup> of Athens, before Solon, destroyed the Athenian *gens* with the same implacability with which those of your country destroy the commune. I am afraid that institution is doomed. But on the other hand, capitalism opens out new views and new hopes. Look at what it has done and is doing in the West. A great nation like yours outlives every crisis. There is no great historical evil without a compensating historical progress. Only the *modus operandi* is changed. *Que les destinées s'accomplissent!*<sup>2</sup> . . .

Written in English

<sup>1</sup> Big peasants and parasites.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> Let destiny take its course!—*Ed.*

## ENGELS TO H. STARKENBURG

London, January 25, 1894

Dear Sir,

Here is the answer to your questions:

1. What we understand by the economic relations, which we regard as the determining basis of the history of society, is the manner and method by which human beings in a given society produce their means of subsistence and exchange the products among themselves (in so far as division of labour exists). Thus the *entire technique* of production and transport is here included. According to our conception this technique also determines the manner and method of exchange and, further, the distribution of products and with it, after the dissolution of gentile society, also the division into classes, and hence the relations of lordship and servitude and with them the state, politics, law, etc. Further included in economic relations are the *geographical basis* on which they operate and those remnants of earlier stages of economic development which have actually been transmitted and have survived—often only through tradition or by force of inertia; also of course the external environment which surrounds this form of society.

If, as you say, technique largely depends on the state of science, science depends far more still on the *state* and the *requirements* of technique. If society has a technical need, that helps science forward more than ten universities. The whole of hydrostatics (Torricelli, etc.) was called forth by the necessity for regulating the mountain streams of Italy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. We have only known anything reasonable about electricity since its technical applicability was discovered. But unfortunately it has become the custom in Germany to write the history of the sciences as if it had fallen from the skies.

2. We regard economic conditions as the factor which ultimately conditions historical development. But race is itself an economic factor. Here, however, two points must not be overlooked:

a) Political, juridical, philosophical, religious, literary, artistic, etc., development is based on economic development. But all these react upon one another and also upon the economic basis. It is not that the economic condition is the *cause* and *alone active*, while everything else only has a passive effect. There is, rather, interaction on the basis of economic necessity, which *ultimately* always asserts itself. The state, for instance, exercises an influence by protective

tariffs, free trade, good or bad fiscal system; and even the deadly inanition and impotence of the German philistine, arising from the miserable economic condition of Germany from 1648 to 1830 and expressing itself at first in pietism, then in sentimentality and cringing servility to princes and nobles, was not without economic effect. It was one of the greatest hindrances to recovery and was not shaken until the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars made the chronic misery an acute one. So it is not, as people try here and there conveniently to imagine, that the economic condition produces an automatic effect. No. Men make their history themselves, only they do so in a given environment which conditions it and on the basis of actual relations already existing, among which the economic relations, however much they may be influenced by the other—political and ideological—ones, are still ultimately the decisive ones, forming the red thread which runs through them and alone leads to understanding.

b) Men make their history themselves, but not as yet with a collective will according to a collective plan or even in a definite, delimited given society. Their aspirations clash, and for that very reason all such societies are governed by *necessity*, which is complemented by and appears under the forms of *accident*. The necessity which here asserts itself athwart all accident is again ultimately economic necessity. This is where the so-called great men come in for treatment. That such and such a man and precisely that man arises at a particular time in a particular country is, of course, pure chance. But cut him out and there will be a demand for a substitute, and this substitute will be found, good or bad, but in the long run he will be found. That Napoleon, just that particular Corsican, should have been the military dictator whom the French Republic, exhausted by its own warfare, had rendered necessary, was chance; but that, if a Napoleon had been lacking, another would have filled the place, is proved by the fact that the man was always found as soon as he became necessary: Caesar, Augustus, Cromwell, etc. While Marx discovered the materialist conception of history, Thierry, Mignet, Guizot and all the English historians up to 1850 are the proof that it was being striven for, and the discovery of the same conception by Morgan proves that the time was ripe for it and that it simply *had* to be discovered.

So with all the other accidents, and apparent accidents, of history. The further the particular sphere which we are investigating is removed from the economic sphere and approaches that of pure abstract ideology, the more shall we find it exhibiting accidents in its development, the more will its curve run in a zigzag. But if you plot the average axis of the curve, you will find that the axis of this

curve will run more and more nearly parallel to the axis of the curve of economic development the longer the period considered and the wider the field dealt with.

In Germany the greatest hindrance to correct understanding is the irresponsible neglect by literature of economic history. It is so hard, not only to disaccustom oneself to the ideas of history drilled into one at school, but still more to rake up the necessary material for doing so. Who, for instance, has read old G. von Gülich,<sup>1</sup> whose dry collection of material nevertheless contains so much stuff for the clarification of innumerable political facts!

For the rest, the fine example which Marx has given in *The Eighteenth Brumaire* should, I think, provide you fairly well with information on your questions, just because it is a practical example. I have also, I believe, already touched on most of the points in *Anti-Dühring* I, chs. 9-11, and II, 2-4, as well as in III, 1, or Introduction, and also in the last section of *Feuerbach*.

Please do not weigh each word in the above too scrupulously, but keep the general connection in mind; I regret that I have not the time to word what I am writing to you as exactly as I should be obliged to do for publication. . . .

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<sup>1</sup> Engels has in mind the following work by G. Gülich, consisting of many volumes: *Geschichtliche Darstellung des Handels, der Gewerbe und des Ackerbaus der bedeutendsten handelstreibenden Staaten unserer Zeit* [*Historical Description of Trade, Industry and Agriculture of the Most Important Commercial States of Our Time*], published in Jena in 1830-45.—Ed.



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- Berthelot, Marcellin** (1827-1907): French chemist; author of first syntheses of organic substances—343.
- Bervi, Vasili Vasilyevich** (pseudonym—Flerovsky) (1829-1918): Russian Narodnik publicist, author of *Condition of the Working Class in Russia* (1869)—50.
- Bismarck, Otto** (1815-98): 25, 26, 40, 44, 135, 203, 291, 322, 375, 414-416, 426, 429, 437, 453.
- Blanc, Louis** (1811-82): French petty-bourgeois Socialist—318, 321, 343.
- Blanqui, Louis Auguste** (1805-81): French revolutionist, utopian Communist—307.
- Bleichröder, Gerson** (1822-93): head of German bank in Berlin, participated in Prussian government financial operations, Bismarck's personal banker—291.
- Blind, Karl** (1826-1907): German petty-bourgeois journalist, took part in Revolution of 1848; later National-Liberal and supporter of Bismarck—413.
- Bloch, Joseph**: editor of journal *Sozialistische Monatshefte*—443.
- Böhme, Jakob** (1575-1624): German mystical philosopher—89.
- Bolingbroke, Henry St. John** (1678-1751): English political figure, Conservative; in philosophy, deist-materialist—98.
- Bolte, Friedrich**: German Socialist, leading member of First International in America—422.
- Born, Stephan** (real name Buttermilch) (1824-98): German worker, member of Communist League, took part in Revolution of 1848—318, 319.
- Bornsted, Adalbert** (1808-51): German publicist, secret agent of Prussian government in France—317.
- Börnstein, Heinrich** (1805-92): German petty-bourgeois democrat; in 1848 was in Paris—317.
- Bougeart, Alfred** (1815-82): French publicist and historian, author of two-volume book on Marat—302.
- Bourbons**: French royal dynasty reigning in France from end of 16th.

- century 'till '1792, and during Restoration (1814-30)—356.
- Bracke, Wilhelm* (1842-80): German Social-Democrat, one of leaders of Eisenach party—13, 15, 37, 41, 434.
- Brentano, Lujo* (1844-1931): German professor of political economy, "socialist of the chair"; viciously attacked Marx in the organ of the German Manufacturers' Association—105.
- Bright, John* (1811-89): English Liberal, advocate of Free Trade; together with Cobden headed the Anti-Corn-Law league—103, 373.
- Broadhurst, Henry* (1840-1911): English trade unionist, Liberal labour politician—380.
- Bruno, Giordano* (1548-1600): Italian philosopher of the Renaissance, combated religion—59.
- Buchez, Philippe Joseph* (1796-1865): ideologist of "Catholic Socialism" in France, disciple of Saint-Simon; advocated establishment of producers' cooperatives with state aid—29, 37.
- Büchner, Georg* (1813-37): German dramatist, publicist and political leader; organizer of secret Society of the Rights of Man in Hessen and Darmstadt (1834)—307.
- Büchner, Ludwig* (1824-99): German physician, popularized natural science; in philosophy, vulgar materialist—338.
- Buckland, William* (1784-1856): English geologist—91.
- Bückler, Johann* (1777-1803): famous Rhenish robber, nicknamed *Schinderhannes* (the flayer)—54.
- Bugge, Sophus* (1833-1907): Oslo professor, commentator and publisher of ancient Scandinavian literature—262.
- Bürgers, Heinrich* (1820-78): German journalist, member of Communist League, one of prisoners at Cologne Communist trial; later Progressive—299, 322.
- C
- Caesar, Gaius Julius* (c. 100-44 B.C.)—164, 173, 184, 225, 258, 260, 264-267, 269, 458.
- Calvin, Jean* (1509-64): ideologist of Reformation in Switzerland—59, 96, 361, 452.
- Camphausen, Ludolf* (1803-90): one of leaders of Rhenish liberal bourgeoisie; headed Prussian Council of Ministers after March Revolution (1848)—143.
- Carlyle, Thomas* (1795-1881): English Conservative writer and philosopher—110.
- Cartwright, Edmund* (1743-1823): English mechanic; invented first mechanical loom—100.
- Catherine II* (1729-96): Russian empress (1762-96)—55.
- Charlemagne* (742-814): King of the Franks; in 800 proclaimed German emperor—275-276.
- Charles I* (1600-49): King of England (1625-49)—96.
- Civilis, Julius* (1st century A.D.): leader of German tribe Batavi, who rose against Rome in the late sixties—263.
- Cleisthenes* (end of 6th century B.C.): ancient Greek statesman—246.
- Cobden, Richard* (1804-65): English bourgeois economist, Liberal, Free Trader, founder of Anti-Corn-Law league—103.
- Collins, Anthony* (1676-1729): English materialist philosopher—90.
- Columbus, Christopher* (c. 1446-1506)—83.
- Copernicus, Nicholas* (1473-1543)—59, 61, 336.
- Coulanges*. See *Fustel de Coulanges*.
- Coward, William* (1657-1725): English materialist philosopher, physician—90.
- Cromwell, Oliver* (1599-1658)—96, 458.
- Cuno, Theodor Friedrich* (1847-1934): German Socialist, member of First International; member of Hague Congress (1872) where he carried out Marx's line; later took part in working-class movement in America—424.
- Cunow, Heinrich* (1862-1936): one of theoreticians of revisionism in German Social-Democratic Party; ethnographer, author of number of works on history of primitive society—200.

## NAME INDEX

*Cuvier, George* (1769-1832): French naturalist, founder of comparative anatomy and paleontology—63, 176.

## D

- Dalton, John* (1766-1844): English physicist and chemist, founder of atomic theory in chemistry—64.
- Daniels, Roland* (1819-55): Cologne physician, member of Communist League, one of prisoners at Cologne Communist trial—322.
- Danielson, Nikolai Franzovich* (pseudonym, Nikolai-on) (1844-1918): Russian economist, one of ideologists of liberal Narodism; first translator of *Capital* into Russian—454.
- Dante, Alighieri* (1265-1321)—143.
- Darwin, Charles* (1809-82)—65, 69, 74, 76, 80, 121, 153, 166, 340, 352.
- Democritus* (c. 460-370 B.C.): ancient Greek materialist philosopher, one of founders of atomic theory—89.
- Demosthenes* (c. 384-322 B.C.): ancient Greek orator—232.
- Deprez, Marcel* (1843-1918): French engineer famous for his works on electricity—154.
- Descartes, René* (1596-1650): French philosopher and mathematician; in philosophy, dualist; in physics, mechanical materialist—59, 118, 336, 338, 441.
- Dicaearchus* (4th century B.C.): ancient Greek historian and geographer, disciple of Aristotle—233.
- Diderot, Denis* (1713-84)—118, 341.
- Dietz, Wilhelm* (1843-1922): prominent representative of Right wing of German Social-Democratic Party, owner of social-democratic book publishing house in Stuttgart—43, 45.
- Dietzgen, Joseph* (1828-88): German proletarian materialist philosopher; member of Communist League, leather worker by trade—351.
- Diodorus of Sicily* (1st century B.C.): ancient Greek historian, author of work on history of the East, Greece and Rome—262, 269.
- Dionysius of Halicarnassus* (1st century B.C.): Roman historian of Greek descent—236.
- Disraeli, Benjamin* (Lord Beaconsfield) (1804-81): British statesman and writer, leader of Conservative Party—103.
- Dodwell, Henry* (d. 1784): English materialist philosopher—90.
- Draper, John William* (1811-82): American naturalist and historian—72.
- Dühring, Eugene* (1833-1921)—86, 87.
- Duns Scotus, Johannes* (c. 1265-1308): Franciscan monk, one of later representatives of English scholastic philosophy—89.
- Dureau de La Malle, Adolph* (1777-1857): French historian, author of works on the economy of ancient Rome and Northern Africa—256.
- Dürer, Albrecht* (1471-1528)—58.

## E

- Eccarius, Georg* (1818-89): German tailor, member of Communist League and of General Council of First International; later took part in British trade-union movement—314.
- Elhrhard, Johann Ludwig* (b. 1820): one of prisoners at Cologne Communist trial; was acquitted—322.
- Elsner, Karl Friedrich* (1809-94): German democrat, publicist, member Prussian National Assembly (1848), one of leaders of liberal bourgeoisie in Breslau—301.
- Engels, Frederick* (1820-95)—15, 41, 45, 91, 106, 144, 145, 156, 168, 314, 316, 317, 325, 379, 411, 412, 414.
- Eschenbach, Wolfram*. See *Wolfram von Eschenbach*.
- Espinas, Alfred* (1844-1922): French philosopher and sociologist—178, 179.
- Euclid* (4th-3rd century B.C.): ancient Greek mathematician—59.
- Euripides* (480-406 B.C.): ancient Greek dramatist—203.
- Eyerbeck, August Hermann* (1816-60): German physician, member of Communist League—313, 321.

## F

- Faucher, Julius* (1820-78): German vulgar economist, Free Trader; 1861 became member Prussian Chamber of Deputies, Progressive—416.
- Favre, Jules* (1809-80): French politician, bourgeois republican, member Government of National Defence (1870-71), took part in bloody suppression of Paris Commune—426.
- Ferdinand V* (The Catholic) (1452-1516): King of Castile and Aragon (1479-1516); his reign initiated period of Spain's political power—194.
- Feuerbach, Ludwig* (1804-72)—324-326, 332, 333, 336-337, 339, 340, 342-349, 365-367, 450.
- Fichte, Johann Gottlieb* (1762-1814)—452.
- Fischer, Richard* (1855-1926): German Social-Democrat, member editorial board, newspaper *Vorwärts*; later centrist—45.
- Fison, Lorimer* (1832-1907): English missionary on Fiji Islands and in Australia, pioneered in scientific investigation of Australia—186, 188.
- Flerovsky*. See *Bervi, V. V.*
- Flocon, Ferdinand* (1800-66): French petty-bourgeois publicist and politician—145, 317-318.
- Forster, William* (1818-86): English manufacturer, Liberal, 1861 became M.P.—102, 103.
- Fourier, Charles* (1772-1837)—109, 111, 113, 114, 131, 134, 167, 209, 278, 295, 400, 409, 418.
- Frederick II* (1712-86): King of Prussia (1740-86)—398.
- Frederick William* (1620-88): Elector of Brandenburg (1640-88)—453.
- Frederick William III* (1770-1840): King of Prussia (1797-1840)—136, 143, 327, 329.
- Frederick William IV* (1795-1861): King of Prussia (1840-61)—331.
- Freeman, Edward August* (1823-92): English liberal historian—157.
- Freiligrath, Ferdinand* (1810-76): German revolutionary poet, member of editorial board *Neue Rhei-*

*nische Zeitung*, member Communist League; in fifties joined petty-bourgeois elements among German emigrants; 1868 returned to Germany—322.

*Fustel de Coulanges, Numa Denis* (1830-89): French historian of antiquity—235.

## G

- Gaius* (2nd century A.D.): Roman jurist, compiler of one of earliest handbooks on Roman law—198.
- Galle, Johann Gottfried* (1812-1910): German astronomer; discovered Neptune (1846)—336.
- Geib, August* (1842-79): German social-democrat; member of Reichstag since 1874—13, 15.
- Giffen, Robert* (1837-1910): English bourgeois economist and statistician—140, 376, 390.
- Giraud-Teulon, Alexis* (b. 1839): historian of primitive society, Geneva professor, disciple of Bachofen—165, 167, 178, 179, 201.
- Gladstone, Robertson*: brother of William Gladstone, Liverpool merchant, Free Trader—31.
- Gladstone, William* (1809-98): prominent British statesman, leader of Liberal Party during second half of 19th century—237, 380, 424.
- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang* (1749-1832)—182, 330, 339.
- Gögg, Amand* (1820-97): German democrat, member of Baden revolutionary government in 1849, one of leaders of bourgeois pacifist League of Peace and Freedom—38, 321.
- Gould, Jay* (1836-92): American banker and railroad king—446.
- Gregory of Tours* (c. 540-594): 573 appointed Bishop of Tours (Gaul), historian of the Franks—264.
- Grimm brothers—Jakob* (1785-1863) and *Wilhelm* (1786-1859): German philologists, researchers in German language and literature—261.
- Grove, William Robert* (1811-96): English naturalist—64.

- Grote, George* (1794-1871): English historian—232-235.  
*Grün, Karl Theodor* (1817-87): German publicist, one of representatives of so-called "True Socialism"—333.  
*Guizot, François Pierre* (1787-1874): French bourgeois historian and statesman, monarchist—144, 356, 458.  
*Gülich, Gustav* (1791-1847): German historian and economist—459.

## H

- Hansemann, David Justus* (1790-1864): leader of Rhenish bourgeoisie in 1848—143.  
*Harney, George Julian* (1817-97): leader of Left wing in Chartist movement—312.  
*Harring, Harro* (1798-1870): German poet, publicist of democratic trend—313.  
*Hartley, David* (1705-57): English physician, psychologist and philosopher; materialist, follower of Locke, deist—90.  
*Hasenclever, Wilhelm* (1837-89): Lassallean, President of General German Workers' Union (1871)—35, 40.  
*Hasselmann, Wilhelm* (b. 1844): one of leaders of Lassallean General German Workers' Union; 1880 expelled from German Social-Democratic Party as anarchist—25, 35, 40.  
*Hatzfeldt, Sophie* (1805-81): friend and supporter of Lassalle—413, 415.  
*Haupt, Wilhelm* (b. 1833): one of prisoners at Cologne Communist trial; gave away members of Central Committee in Cologne; fled to Brazil before the trial—321.  
*Haxthausen, August* (1792-1866): Prussian official and writer, travelled in Russia (1834-44) and described vestiges of communal system in Russian land relations—51, 421.  
*Hegel, Georg Friedrich Wilhelm* (1770-1831)—93, 107, 114, 118, 122-124, 289, 324, 327-331, 333, 335-339, 341, 345, 349-351, 353, 355, 357, 432, 449, 450, 452.  
*Heine, Heinrich* (1797-1856)—326.  
*Henry VII* (1457-1509): King of England (1485-1509)—97.  
*Henry VIII* (1491-1547): King of England (1509-47)—97.  
*Hepner, Adolf* (1846-1923): German social-democrat, member of editorial board of *Volksstaat*, later emigrated to America—430.  
*Heraclitus* (end of 6th-beginning of 5th century B.C.): ancient Greek materialist philosopher and dialectician—119.  
*Herodotus* (c. 484-c. 425 B.C.): ancient Greek historian—184, 203.  
*Herschel, William* (1738-1822): English astronomer—62.  
*Herwegh, Georg Friedrich* (1817-75): German revolutionary poet—317.  
*Herzen, Alexander Ivanovich* (1812-70)—49, 51.  
*Heusler, Andreas* (1834-1921): Swiss jurist; author of works on Swiss and German law—200.  
*Hins, Eugène* (1839-1923): one of organizers of Belgian section of First International, member of Belgian Federal Council, Proudhonist, later Bakunist—427.  
*Hobbes, Thomas* (1588-1679): English materialist philosopher—90, 91, 98, 336, 449.  
*Höchberg, Karl* (pseudonym Richter) (1853-85): German journalist, social-philanthropist, financed several social-democratic publications—434.  
*Hohenzollern*: dynasty reigning in Brandenburg-Prussia (1415-1918) and in German Empire (1871-1918)—303, 416.  
*Homer* (c. 9th century B.C.): ancient Greek poet, reputed author of *Iliad* and *Odyssey*—173, 202, 203, 235-236.  
*Howitt, Alfred William* (1830-1908): Australian anthropologist and historian of Australia—188.  
*Humboldt, Alexander* (1769-1859): German naturalist and geographer—144.  
*Hume, David* (1711-76): English agnostic philosopher, subjective idealist—335, 336.

*Huschke, Georg Philipp* (1801-86): German historian of jurisprudence, author of works on Roman law and theology, professor at Breslau—253.

## I

*Irminon* (d. c. 825): French Benedictine monk, composer of so-called "Polyptique," a registry of the landed possessions of the monastery of Saint-Germain de Pré early in 9th century—276.

## J

*Jacoby, Abraham* (b. 1832): German physician, member of Communist League, one of prisoners at Cologne Communist trial—322.

*John of Saxony* (literary pseudonym, Philalethes) (1801-73): Prince, later King of Saxony (1854-73), translator of Dante—143.

*Joule, James* (1818-89): English physicist—63.

## K

*Kanitz, Hans Wilhelm Alexander* (1841-1913): Prussian Conservative, member of Reichstag (1889-1913); in 1894 proposed bill artificially fixing grain prices by buying up all imported grain ("Kanitz proposal")—389.

*Kant, Immanuel* (1724-1804)—61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 93, 114, 121, 328, 335, 336, 340, 348, 449, 452.

*Kautsky, Karl* (1854-1938)—42.

*Kaye, John William* (1814-76): English publicist, author of number of works on recent history of India—185.

*Kelley-Wischniewetzky, Florence* (1860-1932): American Socialist, later bourgeois reformer—368.

*Kepler, Johannes* (1571-1630): German astronomer—59.

*Kinkel, Gottfried* (1815-82): German poet, petty-bourgeois democrat; took part in Baden insurrection of 1849; during period of reaction lived in England—321.

*Klein, Johann Jakob*: Cologne physician, one of prisoners at Cologne Communist trial—322.

*Kopp, Hermann Franz* (1817-92): German chemist—343.

*Kossuth, Louis* (Hung. Lajos) (1802-94): leader of Hungarian national-liberation movement, headed bourgeois-democratic elements in Revolution of 1848—321.

*Kovalevsky, Maxim Maximovich* (1851-1916): Russian sociologist, historian and jurist; famous for his researches in primitive gentile relations—88, 197-198, 199, 200, 257, 260, 265.

*Kriege, Hermann* (1820-50): German radical journalist, follower of Weitling, organizer of New York group of League of the Just—313.

*Kugelmann, Ludwig* (1830-1902): Hanover physician, took part in Revolution of 1848, member of First International; corresponded with Marx—413, 417, 418, 420, 421.

*Kuhlmann, Georg* (b. 1812): one of leaders of Weitling movement in Switzerland, "True Socialist"; later turned *agent provocateur* in service of Austrian government—314.

## L

*Lafargue, Paul* (1842-1911): French Socialist, Marx's son-in-law, one of leaders of Marxist wing in French working-class movement—87, 395, 420.

*Lafayette, Marie Joseph* (1757-1834): French general, one of leaders of liberal bourgeois during period of Revolution of 1789; in 1792 fled abroad—302.

*Lamarch, Jean Baptiste* (1744-1829): French naturalist; evolutionist, predecessor of Darwin—65, 339.

*Lamartine, Alphonse* (1790-1869): French poet, liberal bourgeois; in 1848 when he practically headed Provisional Government, he betrayed the interests of the democratic elements—145, 317.

- Lange, Friedrich Albert* (1828-75): German publicist, author of social-reformist book on the working class—27.
- Lange, Ludwig* (1825-85): German philologist—253.
- Laplace, Pierre Simon* (1749-1827): French mathematician and astronomer—61, 62, 66, 92, 121.
- Lassalle, Ferdinand* (1825-64)—13, 19, 20, 25, 26, 27-28, 37, 43, 44, 294, 413-416, 433, 434.
- Latham, Robert Gordon* (1812-88): English physician, linguist and ethnographer, author of number of works of comparative ethnography—162.
- Lavoisier, Antoine Laurent* (1743-94): prominent French chemist—64.
- Ledru-Rollin, Alexander Auguste* (1807-74): French bourgeois republican, one of leaders of petty-bourgeois democracy—321.
- Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm* (1646-1716)—59.
- Leonardo da Vinci* (1452-1519)—58.
- Lessner, Friedrich* (1825-1910): German tailor, member of Communist League, took part in Revolution of 1848, friend of Marx and Engels, emigrated to London, one of leaders of First International—314, 322.
- Letourneau, Charles* (1831-1902): French sociologist and ethnographer—177, 178, 180.
- Leverrier, Urbain Jean Joseph* (1811-77): French astronomer—336.
- Levi, Leone* (1821-88): British bourgeois economist and statistician—376.
- Liebknrecht, Wilhelm* (1826-1900): one of founders and leaders of German social-democracy and Second International—13, 14, 15, 35, 40, 41, 43, 44, 414, 415, 421, 430, 434.
- Linnaeus, Carolus* (1707-78): Swedish naturalist, botanist, classifier of plants and animals—59, 60, 123.
- Liutprand of Cremona* (c. 922-972): Bishop of Cremona (Italy), medieval scholar—272.
- Livy, Titus* (c. 59 B.C.-17 A.D.): Roman historian, author of the *Annals*—251, 253.
- Lochner, Georg*: German carpenter, member of Communist League; emigrated to London, member of General Council of First International, follower of Marx—314.
- Locke, John* (1632-1704): English sensualist philosopher—90, 119, 449.
- Longus* (beginning of 3rd century A.D.): Greek writer, author of pastoral romance *Daphnis and Chloë*—214.
- Louis XIV* (1638-1715): King of France (1643-1715)—362.
- Louis Bonaparte*. See *Napoleon III*.
- Louis-Napoleon*. See *Napoleon III*.
- Louis Philippe* (1773-1850): King of France (1830-48)—29, 31, 97, 102, 307.
- Lubbock, John* (1834-1913): (in 1899 made Lord Avebury) English biologist, Darwinist, ethnologist, archeologist—163-165.
- Luther, Martin* (1483-1546): founder of Protestantism in Germany—58, 95, 361, 452.
- Lyell, Charles* (1797-1875): English geologist, founder of doctrine of evolution in geology—63.

## M

- Mably, Gabriel Bonnot* (1709-85): French abbot, theoretician of equalitarian utopian Communism—109.
- Machiavelli, Niccolo* (1469-1527): Italian political figure and writer—58, 413.
- Mädler, Johann Heinrich* (1794-1874): German astronomer—62, 66, 71.
- Maine, Henry* (1822-88): English historian, investigated laws of antiquity, Cambridge professor—216.
- Malthus, Thomas Robert* (1766-1834): English bourgeois economist, author of reactionary theory of population—37.
- Manners, John* (1818-1906): English politician, Conservative—104.
- Mantell, Gideon* (1790-1852): English geologist—91.
- Marat, Jean Paul* (1743-93): one of most conspicuous leaders of

- revolutionary petty bourgeoisie in French Bourgeois Revolution—25, 302.
- Marr, Wilhelm* (1819-1904): German publicist from Hamburg, took part in Weitling movement; in seventies became violent anti-Semite and reactionary—414.
- Marx, Karl* (1818-83)—13, 14, 16, 37, 39, 41-45, 86-87, 91, 99, 125-126, 132, 143-149, 151-155, 166, 167, 176, 181, 184, 197, 198, 202, 204, 207, 231, 233, 234, 236, 238, 278, 284, 297, 299, 302-305, 306, 309, 311-317, 319-321, 323-325, 333, 348, 349, 362, 372, 375, 397, 429, 430, 433, 434, 441-442, 443-444, 450, 451, 458, 459.
- Maurer, Georg Ludwig* (1790-1872): German historian, investigated social system of ancient and medieval Germany—52, 229, 263, 265, 442.
- Mayer, Julius Robert* (1814-78): German naturalist—63.
- Mazzini, Giuseppe* (1805-72): Italian statesman, fought for national independence and unification of Italy—307, 310, 321, 426.
- McLennan, John Ferguson* (1827-81): English scientist, lawyer by profession, one of first historians of family and marriage—161-165, 167, 175, 190, 201, 221, 257.
- Mehring, Franz* (1846-1919): German social-democrat, teacher of literature and historian of German social-democratic movement—450.
- Mentel, Christian Friedrich* (b. 1812): Berlin tailor, member of League of the Just in Berlin, prisoner at Cologne Communist trial; upon release emigrated to America—309.
- Metternich, Klemens Wenzel* (1773-1859): reactionary Austrian chancellor, one of organizers of Holy Alliance—135.
- Mignet, François Auguste* (1796-1884): French bourgeois historian of liberal trend—356, 458.
- Miquel, Johannes* (1828-1901): Prussian banker, National-Liberal; in youth was member of Communist League; member of Reichstag (1867-77) and (1887-90), Minister of Finance (1890-1901)—414, 416, 437.
- Mirabeau, Honoré Gabriel* (1749-91): French politician, leader of oppositional nobility and big bourgeoisie in bourgeois revolution of 18th century in France—414.
- Moleschott, Jacob* (1822-93): physiologist, native of Holland; vulgar materialist—337.
- Moll, Joseph* (1812-49): Cologne watchmaker, member of Communist League; killed in Baden insurrection—308, 314, 317, 319.
- Mommsen, Theodor* (1817-1903): German historian; author of number of works on Roman history and history of Roman law, member of Reichstag, liberal—233, 250-254.
- Montalembert, Charles* (1810-70): French writer and political personage, leader of Catholic party—58.
- Montesquieu, Charles* (1689-1755): French historian and writer, ideologist of constitutional monarchism—452.
- Moody, Dwight* (1837-99): American Evangelist, Young Men's Christian Association leader—101.
- Morelly*: French abbot, representative of 18th century utopian equalitarian Communism—109.
- Morgan, Lewis Henry* (1818-81): American scientist, ethnographer and historian of primitive society—155-158, 162-163, 164-170, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 181-183, 186, 189, 205, 219-221, 224, 229, 234, 237, 238, 239, 246, 253, 260, 264, 278, 295, 296, 458.
- Moschus* (2nd century B.C.): bucolic poet of ancient Greece—214.
- Mühlberger, Arthur* (1847-1907): German physician, Proudhonist—431.
- Münzer, Thomas* (c. 1490-1525): German utopian Communist of time of Reformation, leader of the peasant uprising of 1525 in Germany—108.

## N

- Napier, John* (1550-1617): Scotch mathematician—59.
- Napoleon I* (1769-1821)—92, 112, 116, 135, 202, 206, 221, 300, 342, 381, 427, 448, 458.



*Napoleon III* (Louis Bonaparte) (1808-73): French emperor (1852-70)—31, 101, 147, 375, 421, 429.

*Napoleon, Joseph*, Prince (1822-91): cousin of Napoleon III, known by the sobriquet of *Plon-Plon*—147.

*Nearchus* (4th century B.C.): companion-in-arms of Alexander the Great and admiral of fleet, took part in Indian campaign—200.

*Nechayev, Sergei Gennadiyevich* (1847-82): Russian revolutionist, anarchist—429.

*Newton, Isaac* (1642-1727)—59, 61, 121, 123.

*Niebuhr, Barthold Georg* (1776-1831): German historian, investigated ancient Rome—233, 235, 254, 288.

*Nikolai-on*. See *Danielson*.

*Nothjung, Peter* (1821-81): tailor, then photographer, member of Cologne workers' union; one of prisoners at Cologne Communist trial, subsequently Lassalleian—321, 322.

## O

*Odoacer* (d. 493): German military leader, King of Ostrogoths in Italy (476-493)—268.

*Oken, Lorenz* (1779-1851): German naturalist and natural philosopher—65.

*Otto, Karl Wunibald* (b. c. 1810): Doctor of chemistry, member of Communist League, one of prisoners at Cologne Communist trial—322.

*Owen, Robert* (1771-1858)—109, 111, 115-117, 366, 418.

## P

*Paganini, Nicolo* (1782-1840): outstanding Italian violin player and composer—75.

*Palgrave, Robert Harry Inglis* (1827-1919): English bourgeois economist, editor of *Economist* (1877-83)—377.

*Palmerston, Henry John* (1784-1865): British statesman, leader of most reactionary elements of Liberal Party—146.

*Pavia, Rodriguez* (1827-95): Spanish general, suppressed uprising (1873-74)—55.

*Perseus*: last King of Macedon (179-168 B.C.): fought Rome for independence of Macedon—269.

*Peter I* (the Great) (1672-1725)—48.

*Peter III* (1728-1762): tsar of Russia (1761-1762)—55.

*Pfänder, Karl* (c. 1818-76): German worker, miniature artist, member of Central Committee of Communist League and of General Council of First International, supporter of Marx—314.

*Philalethes*. See *John of Saxony*.

*Philip II* (1527-98): King of Spain (1556-98)—414.

*Philip II, Augustus* (1165-1223): King of France (1180-1223)—452.

*Pisistratus* (c. 600-527 B.C.): became tyrant of Athens in 560—248.

*Pliny the Elder, Gaius Secundus* (c. 24-79 A.D.): Roman geographer—266, 269.

*Plutarch* (c. 48-120 A.D.): Greek writer and moralist—203.

*Priestley, Joseph* (1733-1804): English naturalist and materialist philosopher—90.

*Procopius* (6th century A.D.): Byzantine historian, took part in the campaigns of Belisarius he described—208.

*Proudhon, Pierre Joseph* (1809-65)—39, 144, 318, 349, 400-410, 414, 417, 422.

*Ptolemy, Claudius* (2nd century A.D.): Greek geometrist, astronomer and physicist—59.

*Pugachev, Emelyan* (c. 1744-75): Don Cossack. In latter half of 18th century headed peasant movement against peasant serf bondage to the nobility. Executed in 1775—55.

*Pyat, Félix* (1810-89): French journalist and literateur, petty-bourgeois radical; took part in Revolution of 1848 and Paris Commune—411.

## R

- Raphael, Santi* (1483-1520)—75.  
*Reiff, Wilhelm Josef* (b. 1824): one of prisoners at Cologne Communist trial; had been expelled from League in 1850—322.  
*Renan, Ernest* (1823-92): French philosopher and historian, author of research works into history of Christianity—319, 349.  
*Ricardo, David* (1772-1823)—37, 419.  
*Richard I* ("Coeur de Lion") (1157-99): King of England (1189-99)—452.  
*Richard, Albert* (1846-1925): took part in Lyons revolutionary movement; follower of Bakunin, fought Marx and General Council of First International—429.  
*Robespierre, Maximilien* (1758-94)—344.  
*Robin, Paul* (b. 1837): member of French section of First International, Bakunist—426.  
*Röser, Peter Gerhardt* (1814-65): German cigar maker, one of prisoners at Cologne Communist trial—322.  
*Rousseau, Jean-Jacques* (1712-78)—18, 108, 110, 118, 341, 452.  
*Ruge, Arnold* (1802-80): German radical publicist, Left Hegelian; 1848-50 came out as petty-bourgeois democrat; in sixties adhered to Bismarck and received pension from Prussian government—144, 321.

## S

- Saint-Simon, Henri* (1760-1825)—109, 111-113, 122, 423.  
*Salvianus of Marseilles* (c. 400-484): Bishop of Marseilles (Gaul); outstanding orator and historian—273, 276.  
*Sankey, Ira David* (1840-1908): American Evangelist and teammate of Moody—101.  
*Saussure, Henri de* (1829-1905): Swiss naturalist and traveller—178.  
*Schapper, Karl* (1813-70): one of founders of League of the Just; 1850, when Communist League split, was leader of "Lefts" and together with Willich attacked Marx—307, 308, 313, 317, 319, 321, 322, 411.  
*Scherzer, Andreas* (1807-79): German tailor from Bavaria, follower of Weitling, one of leaders of London German workers' educational society—411.  
*Schiller, Johann Friedrich* (1759-1805)—341.  
*Schinderhannes*. See *Büchler, Johann*.  
*Schlöffel, Gustav Adolf* (1828-49): German democrat, took part in Baden insurrection—300.  
*Schmidt, Conrad* (1863-1932): German social-democrat, revisionist—441, 445.  
*Schömann, Georg Friedrich* (1793-1879): German philologist, historian of antiquity—203, 236.  
*Schramm, Rudolf* (1813-82): German publicist, bourgeois democrat, member of Left of Prussian National Assembly (1848), later adherent of Bismarck—414.  
*Schulze-Delitsch, Franz Hermann* (1808-83): German bourgeois economist, progressive, attempted to direct German working-class movement into channel of handicraftsmen's producers' cooperatives—301, 416.  
*Schurz, Karl* (1829-1906): German petty-bourgeois democrat, took part in Baden insurrection, emigrated to America; took part there in Civil War; became United States Minister to Spain, senator, Secretary of Interior—320.  
*Schweitzer, Jean Baptista* (1833-75): German journalist, after Lassalle's death headed General German Workers' Union—44, 414, 415, 416, 422, 427, 435.  
*Scott, Walter* (1771-1832)—260.  
*Secchi, Angelo* (1818-78): Italian astronomer—66, 70, 71.  
*Servetus, Michael* (1511-53): Spanish physician, made important discovery in blood circulation; burnt at the stake by Calvin in Geneva as freethinker—59.  
*Servius Tullius*: King of Rome, who according to tradition lived in 6th century B.C.—255.

- Shaftesbury, Anthony Ashley Cooper* (1671-1713): English philosopher, deist, follower of Locke—98.
- Sickingen, Franz von* (1481-1523): German knight, protagonist of uprising of lower nobility against big princes in 1522—95.
- Skaldin, V.* (pseudonym of F. P. Elenev) (1828-1902): Russian publicist, contributed to *Otechestvenniye Zapiski*—54.
- Smith, Adam* (1723-90)—403, 452.
- Soetbeer, Adolf* (1814-92): German bourgeois economist and statistician; one of initiators of introduction of gold currency in Germany—445.
- Solon* (6th century B.C.): Athenian lawgiver, laid foundation of Athenian constitution in 594 B.C.—234, 241, 244, 245, 255, 294, 456.
- Sorge, Friedrich Albert* (1828-1906): German Socialist, took part in Revolution of 1848, leader of First International and of working-class movement in America; friend of Marx and Engels—433.
- Spinoza, Baruch* (Benedict) (1632-77): Dutch materialist philosopher—61, 118.
- Starcke, Karl Nikolai* (b. 1858): Danish philosopher and sociologist—325, 326, 336, 340-342, 345, 346.
- Starkenbourg, Heinz*: German socialist—457.
- Stein, Lorenz* (1815-90): German jurist and economist, advocate of "social monarchy"; known as author of *Socialism and Communism in Modern France*, published 1842—301.
- Stieber, Wilhelm* (1818-82): director of Prussian political police, one of organizers of Cologne Communist trial—306, 315.
- Stirner, Max* (pseudonym of Kaspar Schmidt) (1806-56): left Hegelian, theoretician of bourgeois individualism and anarchism—332, 349.
- Strauss, David* (1808-74): left Hegelian, author of *Life of Jesus*, a historical criticism of the gospels—332, 333, 349.
- Strousberg, Bethel Heinrich* (1823-84): big German financier and speculator—437.
- Struve, Pyotr Bernhardovich* (1870-1944): Bourgeois publicist and economist, "Legal Marxist," soon joined Revisionists and later Monarchists—455.
- Stuarts*: royal dynasty—Scottish (from 1371); later English (1603-1714)—98.
- Sugenheim, Samuel* (1811-77): German historian—194.

## T

- Tacitus, Publius Cornelius* (c. 55-120 A.D.): Roman historian—157, 164, 173, 207, 227, 261, 263-269.
- Talandier, Pierre Theodore Alfred* (1822-90): French bourgeois republican; in 1851 emigrated to England—411.
- Tarquinius Superbus*: last king of Rome, reigned according to tradition 534-510 B.C.—255, 256.
- Theocritus* (3rd century B.C.): bucolic poet of ancient Greece—214.
- Thierry, Augustin* (1795-1856): French liberal historian—356, 458.
- Thiers, Louis Adolphe* (1797-1877): French bourgeois historian and politician, hangman of Paris Commune—356, 420, 429.
- Thomson, William* (1824-1907) (1892 made Lord Kelvin): English physicist—78.
- Thorwaldsen, Bertel* (1770-1844): Danish sculptor—75.
- Thucydides* (c. 460-400 B.C.): ancient Greek historian—238.
- Tiberius, Claudius Nero* (42 B.C.-37 A.D.): Roman emperor (14-37 A.D.)—254.
- Tkachev, Pyotr Nikitich* (1844-85): Russian petty-bourgeois revolutionist, published journal *Nabat*, in Geneva (1875-81)—46, 47, 49, 51-55.
- Tölcke, Karl Wilhelm* (1817-93): German Socialist, one of leaders of Lassallean General German Workers' Union—35, 40.
- Torricelli, Evangelista* (1608-47): Italian physicist and mathematician—60, 457.
- Tylor, Edward Burnett* (1832-1917): English anthropologist, historian of primitive culture—158.

## U

*Ulfla* (c. 311-383): bishop, inventor of Gothic alphabet—254.

## V

*Varus, Publius Quintilius* (killed in 9 A.D.): Roman general in Germany—249.

*Venedey, Jakob* (1805-71): German radical publicist, later moderate liberal—307.

*Victoria* (1819-1901): Queen of England (1837-1901)—116.

*Vinoy, Joseph* (1800-80): French general commanding Versailles army at time of Paris Commune—420.

*Vogt, Karl* (1817-95): German vulgar materialist, rabid enemy of proletarian and communist movements, Bonapartist—147, 338, 421.

*Voltaire, François Marie* (Arouet) (1694-1778)—341, 362.

## W

*Wachsmuth, Wilhelm* (1784-1866): German historian, professor at Leipzig, author of a number of works on antiquity and European history—203, 453.

*Wagner, Hermann* (1815-89): German publicist; adherent of Bismarck—415.

*Wagner, Richard* (1813-83): German composer—181.

*Waitz, Georg* (1813-86): German medieval historian—265.

*Watson, John Forbes* (1827-92): author of a number of works on recent history of India—185.

*Watt, James* (1736-1819): English physicist, engineer, inventor, one of creators of modern steam engine—100.

*Weiting, Wilhelm* (1808-71): German artisan, most pronounced representative of German utopian equalitarian Communism, was influenced by Fourier—117, 309-311, 313, 320, 321.

*Wermuth*: Prussian police official—306, 315.

*Westermarck, Edward Alexander* (1862-1939): sociologist and ethnographer, professor at Helsingfors University—178, 179, 181, 192.

*Westphalen, Ferdinand von* (1799-1876): half-brother of Jenny Marx; 1850-58 Prussian Minister of Interior; reactionary—144.

*Weydemeyer, Joseph* (1818-66): German revolutionist, Communist, friend of Marx; in 1851 emigrated to America—410.

*William I* (1797-1888): King of Prussia (1861-88) and German emperor (1871-88)—453.

*Willich, August* (1810-78): Prussian officer, member of Communist League and head of the group of "Lefts" opposing Marx after Revolution of 1848—305, 319-322, 411.

*Wolff, Kaspar Friedrich* (1733-94): German anatomist and physiologist—65.

*Wolff, Wilhelm* (1809-64): German publicist, Communist, close friend of Marx and Engels, to whom Marx dedicated first volume of *Capital*—303, 305, 315, 317, 318.

*Wolfram von Eschenbach* (1170-1220): medieval German poet—208.

*Wright, Arthur* (1803-75): American missionary, ethnographer, one of L. Morgan's correspondents—191.

## Y

*York, Theodor* (1830-74): German social-democrat, member of Lassallean General German Workers' Union, one of founders of German Social-Democratic Party in Eisenach; strove for union with Lassalleans—430.

*Yaroslav the Wise* (978-1054): Prince of Kiev (1019-54)—199.

## Z

*Zurita, Jerónimo* (1512-80): Spanish historian—200.

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